



NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

ORTLEY BEACH AND THE ROUTE 35 CORRIDOR, TOMS RIVER, NEW JERSEY

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Neighborhood Plan

Ortley Beach and the Route 35 Corridor, Toms River, New Jersey

INTRODUCTION

This Neighborhood Plan for Ortley Beach is intended to look at a number of factors which will affect the successful recovery of this barrier island neighborhood of the Township of Toms River, from the present state of the infrastructure and the ongoing re-building efforts, to methods of providing a sense of unity and community. It is intended to build upon the Strategic Plan adopted by the Ortley Beach Voters and Taxpayers Association (OBVTA) in 2014, which was attached to the Toms River Township Sandy Recovery Planning Report (SRPR).

This Neighborhood Plan provides an analysis of the existing development pattern within the Ortley Beach Neighborhood and its associated bulk standards to determine specific recommendations for changes that would make the neighborhood more resilient to future storm events such as Superstorm Sandy. As noted in the project scope, the Plan uses the sustainable development principles of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) rating systems; specifically LEED for Homes (LEED-Home) and LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND). The LEED-Home standards are applicable for homeowners who are renovating as well as those considering a complete demolition and rebuild. The LEED-ND standards apply to the neighborhood as a whole and relate to maintaining and enhancing connectivity (and thereby “walkability”) within the neighborhood for pedestrians and bicyclists, sustainable stormwater management, and enhancing neighborhood goods and services, parks and open space and schools within walking distance of the homes (1/4 mile or less). The next section of the Neighborhood Plan provides design standards to assist property owners with renovating and rebuilding.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PRINCIPLES

The planning principles employed in this Neighborhood Plan are based on evaluations by the Township professional staff and interaction with Ortley Beach property owners and business owners represented by the OBVTA.

- To guide the OBVTA, in partnership with the Township, to implement thoughtful, innovative, and resilient projects that will advance the visual identity of Ortley Beach as a cohesive waterfront neighborhood of the Township of Toms River, distinct from the Borough of Lavallette to the north and the Borough of Seaside Heights to the south.
- To provide practical and affordable recommendations to make Ortley Beach more resilient to future storm threats while improving quality of life, access to parks and open space and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- To fully engage stakeholders about the impacts of climate change and to develop pathways to resilience based on sound science.
- To recommend the leveraging of grants and investments from the philanthropic community to help OBVTA implement the recommendations of this Neighborhood Plan.



Map 1: Map of the Ortley Beach Planning Area

EXISTING CONDITIONS ANALYSIS

The initial assessment for the Neighborhood Plan involved a site visit of the area with local representatives and an analysis of the information gathered by Township Planners, investigations, and historic documents. From this baseline information, the following observations and ideas emerged:

1. There are only two existing “Bicycle Friendly” routes located on municipal roadways within Ortley Beach: the boardwalk section from Coolidge to 7th Avenue; and from 5th Avenue to the northern border. Bay Boulevard runs through Ortley Beach along the Barnegat Bay and is an Ocean County roadway with a planted median and wide shoulders which are suitable for bicycles.
2. The mapping of the NJDOT Route 35 reconstruction project shown on the NJDOT project website states that there will be an effort to implement a Complete Streets policy by providing more intentional accommodations for bicycle mobility through either the use of “sharrows” (shared road markings) or the provision of shoulders of adequate width for bicycle use. In Ortley Beach the Route 35 northbound and southbound Design Typical Sections (DTS) show shoulders for bicycle use. .
3. The following locations have traffic signals:
 - a. 35N and Fielder Avenue
 - b. 35N and 3rd Avenue
 - c. 35N and 6th Avenue
 - d. 35S and 6th Avenue
 - e. 37East and Central Avenue

4. The following intersections have seasonal pedestrian crossings:
 - a. 35N and Harding Avenue
 - b. 35N and 6th Avenue
 - c. 35S and Harding Avenue
 - d. 35S and Fielder Avenue
 - e. 35S and 2nd Avenue
 - f. 35S and 3rd Avenue

5. The initial analysis identifies the following as potential destinations to be considered as part of the planning process:
 - a. Bayside Park on Bay Boulevard near 2nd Street
 - b. The two ADA accessible ramps to the beach at:
 - Fielder Avenue and Ocean Avenue
 - 4th Avenue and Ocean Avenue (at facilities building)
 - c. Potentially safe pedestrian and bicycle routes to shopping areas on 35 and 37 (need to identify seasonal locations such as, Barnacle Bill's and year round destinations, such as CVS, A&P and the branch banks.

6. There is signage at the following locations:
 - a. Leaving the area on 37S is a sign saying: "Township of Toms River Thanks You for Visiting"
 - b. Small green roadway sign coming in on 37 reads: "Entering Township of Toms River"
 - c. At the intersection of 37 East and Central Avenue are two differing signs:
 - Lower red signs which reads: "*Township of Toms River Welcomes You to its Beaches, Thank You for Helping Rebuild*"
 - Higher sign next to this is a green roadway sign reading: "*Entering Ortley Beach*"
 - d. Crossing Central Avenue as it merges into 35N at Colony Avenue is a small blue oval sign which reads: "*Welcome to Ortley Beach*", with a seashell shown in the center
 - e. There is no signage on Grand Central Boulevard coming from Seaside Heights identifying Ortley Beach. A "gateway" treatment of signage and landscaping should be considered (See Figure 5 and Figure 11, Signs #1 and #4 for suggested locations). At the time of the preparation of this Neighborhood Plan the Township was developing new signage for its barrier island neighborhoods with a message related to "Toms River Township's Beaches". These new proposed signs could improve the existing conditions.
 - f. There is a green roadway sign on Route 35S near 1st Avenue that reads: "*Welcome to Ortley Beach*"
 - g. The painting on the water tower at the intersection of 35S and 6th Avenue, with dolphins on the northside, is a landmark identifying Ortley Beach from the north and south approaches, but the dolphins are only visible from the north approach.
 - h. There is a lack of any signage along Bay Boulevard in either direction identifying either Toms River or Ortley Beach.

7. Streetscape and pedestrian sidewalks:

The streets within Ortley Beach vary widely as to the width of their cartway and right-of-way. Most lack curbing and sidewalks are present in some streets (especially in the blocks between Route 35N and Ocean Avenue where homes are being rebuilt), but absent in most cases. For example, portions of Brinley Avenue in the area between Washington Avenue and Route 35S has a wide cartway area, but no sidewalks. Where there are sidewalks present there are a wide range of applications, such as, sidewalk attached to the curb (5-7' wide), sidewalk with a curb strip, no sidewalk at all, no curbing at all, stone without edging, etc. In order to improve pedestrian safety through the standardization of sidewalk and curb treatments, sufficient right of way width needs to be obtained. This most likely would have to be done through dedication of land from private property, if available. The other option would be to reduce the cartway width of the roads, within the same right of

way. This would be at the expense of parking, which was a recent concern of the community. The availability of parking on the street is extremely important to the neighborhood and would continue to take precedence over sidewalks where insufficient cartway width exists to accommodate both. Funding of a project of this nature would be secondary to the challenges of land acquisition and dedication.

Where sidewalks are present, improvements could be modified to fit various situations. For example, the areas within the business district where a sidewalk can be accommodated or enhanced could feature one sidewalk pattern for the narrower streets and another for the broader crossing streets. Sidewalks added or replaced along residential streets by property owners will be required to follow Township ordinance construction standards.

8. Overview of Identification:

In summary, there seems to be a lack of identity to Ortley Beach as a separate community from neighboring Lavallette or Seaside Heights and as a distinct part of Toms River Township. The Township has been working to address this issue around a theme for its barrier island neighborhoods of “Toms River Township’s Beaches”. This Neighborhood Plan recommends that these new signs be incorporated into the suggested gateway treatments at the approaches to Ortley Beach on both Route 35 North from Route 37 in Seaside Heights and on Route 35 South from Lavallette.

This idea should extend to the creation of gateway treatments and visuals, art, sculpture, etc. which can provide a unique sense of Ortley Beach as a distinct destination. Wayfinding signage was also brought up as a need by the OBVTA business owners. The challenge to motorists on Route 35S in finding businesses on Route 35N is that they are separated by a block of homes. The NJDOT has recently installed some wayfinding signage along Route 35 South along the stretch where the north and southbound roadway divides. However, a more complete system of wayfinding signage coordinated with the gateway signage referenced above would not only reinforce the visual image and cohesiveness of Ortley Beach as a distinct neighborhood of the Township, but help customers find the existing and future businesses, especially during the summer tourism season. A version of such a system has been employed by the Downtown Toms River Business Improvement District (TRBID) below in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Wayfinding signage is already used in downtown Toms River to direct motorists to primary destinations (left). The image to the right was taken in Nantucket, MA in June of 2015 and shows a system of wayfinding using plaques purchased by businesses mounted into slots on a standard that matches the antique style of the pedestrian lighting on Main Street and points in the direction of the business.

9. Streetscape in Business District:

In addition to the desire to distinguish Ortley Beach as a neighborhood of Toms River Township, as opposed being perceived as part of either adjoining borough of Lavallette or Seaside Heights, the enhancement of the streetscape along the portion of Route 35 North in Ortley Beach where businesses are located was identified by the OBVTA as important. The stretch of Route 35 North within Ortley Beach has a mix of single family homes, multifamily townhouse/condominium buildings and small businesses. The edge of properties abutting the highway varies from having a curb and sidewalk with a narrow "tree lawn" (space between the sidewalk and curb), to frontages with no sidewalk, but with privately owned fencing at the street line that encloses a yard area, to open parking (perpendicular or angled).

Because of the variation in the current condition of the property frontages along Route 35 North, the feasibility for streetscape enhancements will depend on the space available for streetscape amenities such as street trees, decorative, pedestrian-scale street lighting, street furniture, etc. In blocks where space exists between a sidewalk and curb, the recommendation would be to work with NJDOT to obtain permission to plant street trees and possibly ornamental grasses in places where they can be accommodated so that sightlines are not blocked. The OBVTA would need to work with the Township Forester in advance on planting locations and recommended tree species that can withstand the harsh conditions of a confined root zone and a seaside location. The Township has met with the OBVTA regarding the possibility of using a re-forestation grant of trees related to highway improvements along the Garden State Parkway as one source of plant materials.

In blocks where small businesses are located, conditions include a wider concrete sidewalk along the street edge or angled parking with no curb or sidewalk. In these locations, the use of planters and benches sponsored by the individual businesses is recommended. Figure 2 also depicts a decorative street light of a design that would be available through JCP&L. However, the cost of installation would have to be covered through a streetscape grant such as are provided through NJDOT or a new round of Sandy recovery funding from the New Jersey Economic Development Authority. Because the overhead power lines were not replaced underground by JCP&L after Superstorm Sandy destroyed much of the infrastructure along the barrier island, the telephone poles were re-erected along Route 35N. Standard overhead street lights were installed on the poles, but the business owners have expressed concern that the lighting is poor within the business district.

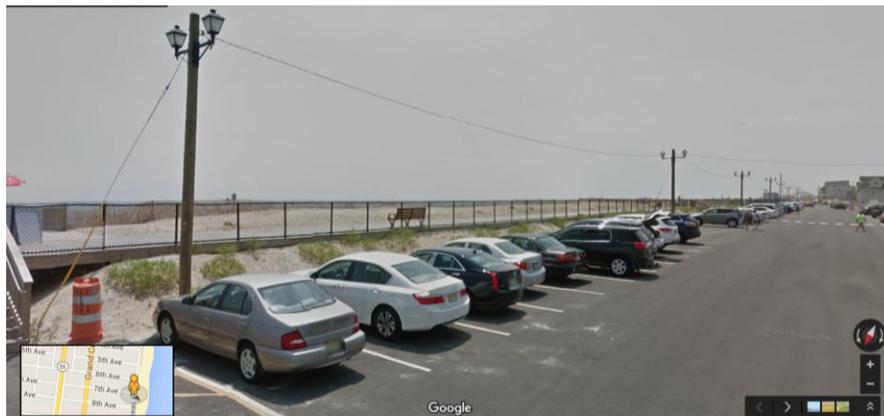


Figure 2: Streetscape enhancements with better lighting and benches, as were expressed as a need for the business district along Route 35 N in Ortley Beach. The ultimate vision for the downtown business district would be the installation of pedestrian scale lighting standards shown in the bottom image with the ability to have seasonal hanging baskets and banners for events and identification. However, because of the competing priority of parking in the downtown, the most practical solution would be to work with JCP&L to install additional decorative lamps on the existing poles along both sides of Route 35N as was done along Ocean Avenue and the boardwalk (center and top images). Benches could be sponsored by local businesses and should be the same as those used on the boardwalk for continuity.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Approximately 100 residents took part in a discussion about the present state of Ortley Beach at the OBVTA meeting in June of 2015. The Township and Maser Consulting provided some ideas and observations regarding the existing conditions and how to improve for the future. Based on the stakeholder comments from the OBVTA presentation and site investigations and meetings with the Township and OBVTA representatives prior to and after the presentation in June, a series of recommendations were developed by the project team. This section of the Neighborhood Plan provides a summary of the recommendations, which focused on:

1. Establishing a network of popular destinations connected by the safest available routes for bicycle and pedestrian access.
2. Improving the visual quality of the neighborhood.
3. Providing a strategy for appropriate reconstruction and recovery.



Figure 3: MAP OF POTENTIAL DESTINATIONS

Figure 3 shows locations within Ortley Beach that have been identified in collaboration with the Township and the OBVTA as destinations. Destinations are places that residents and visitors would want to travel to either on foot, by bicycle or by car.

A summary of the destinations that have been identified on Figure 3 include the beach, parks, businesses, etc. These destinations are described in greater detail below.



Figure 4: Bayside Park (left) and the beach access points at Fielder and Ocean Avenue (right) are two popular destinations in Ortley Beach.

SUMMARY OF DESTINATIONS IN ORTLEY BEACH

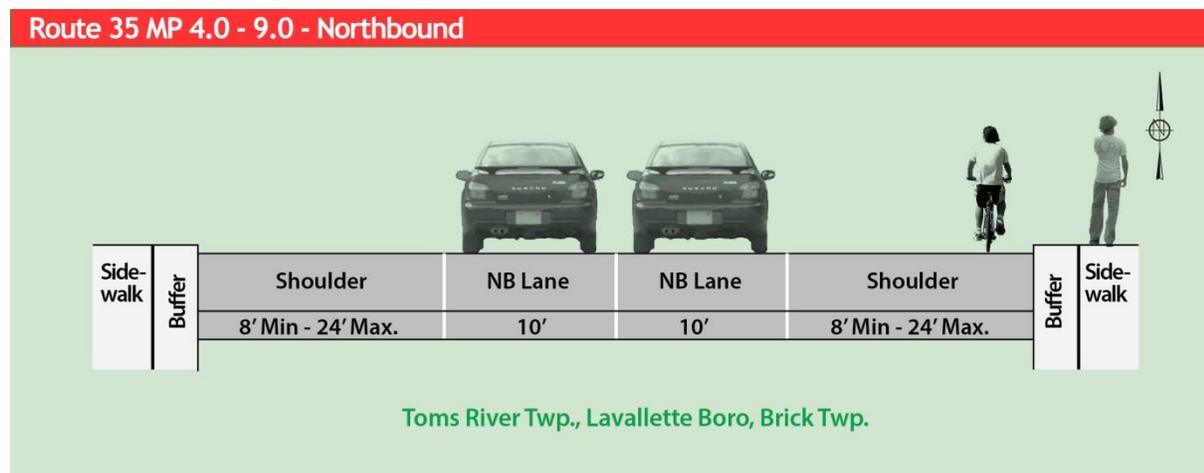
- A. Bayside Park on Bay Boulevard near 2nd Street
- B. The two ADA accessible ramps to the beach at:
 - Fielder Avenue and Ocean Avenue
 - 4th Avenue and Ocean Avenue (at facilities building)
- C. Safe pedestrian and bicycle routes to:
 - The A&P/Acme, Bank and McDonald's shopping areas on Route 37 West
 - The downtown Business District on Route 35 North
- D. Potential park land on W Pennsylvania Avenue and Fielder Avenue
- E. Former First Aid Squad site (corner of 6th Avenue and Route 35S) – The building, which housed ambulance and fire apparatus, was destroyed by Sandy and a decision on how to use the site has not yet been made by the Township. However, any future use or development of the site would be restricted to municipal services.
- F. Kayak/Canoe Launch – There is currently no location in Ortley Beach to launch a canoe or kayak into the Barnegat Bay. The Township is in the process of preparing a Municipal Public Access Plan (MPAP) with a grant from the NJDEP and is investigating possible sites along the Barnegat Bay. The Draft MPAP describes Ortley Beach as the only publically owned beach in Toms River Township that provides public access. However, while the North Beaches of the Township are owned by beach associations that allow launching of kayaks after swimming hours, Ortley currently does not have a beach association that enables kayak launching. The MPAP indicates that the Township will continue to investigate the feasibility of a kayak launch at Bayside Park, provided the concerns of the neighboring residential property owners can be addressed.



Figure 5: MAP OF PROPOSED BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

BICYCLE ROUTES AND POTENTIAL PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION:

There is presently no planned internal circulation for bicycles in Ortle Beach and a lack of connectivity for pedestrians. The plan below indicates the proposed improvements to the State Route 35 North and South through the Ortle Beach area, which indicates shoulders where bicycles could ride.



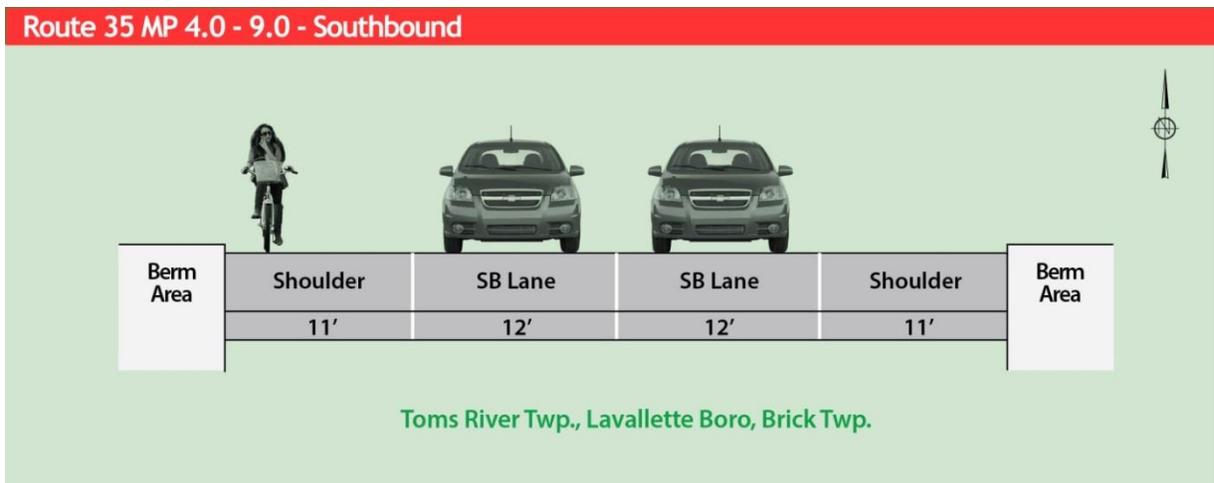


Figure 6: Photo directly above was taken in February of 2016 after dedicated bicycle lane was added to Route 35 South. NJDOT has completed sections of Route 35 S further to the north and many areas have sidewalk and small street trees.

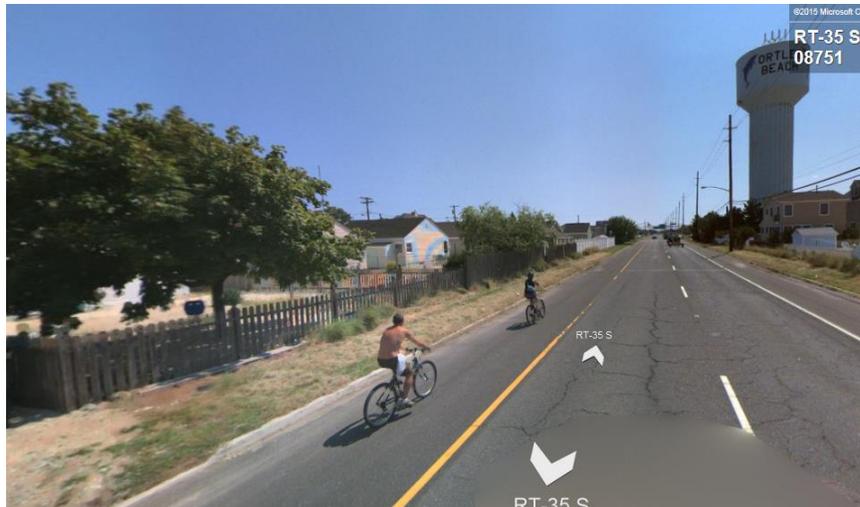


Figure 7: (Top): Bing.com streetview of Route 35 South in Ortleby Beach showing the previous use of shoulders as a bicycle route. (Center): Photo taken in February of 2016 of completed bikelane along the right side of Route 35 South. (Bottom): Photo taken in February of 2016 showing new sidewalk along a portion of Route 35 South (facing north), showing shoulder and bikelane.

Based upon our field analysis and collaboration with the Township and OBVTA, this Neighborhood Plan recommends the following routes for bicycles:

- A. Designate the western edge of Ocean Avenue as a signed north-south bicycle route between Fielder Avenue to the south and 3rd Avenue to the north. This recommendation is based upon the existing width of the roadway, but would be contingent upon the retention of parking and the approval by the Township Engineer on the placement of bicycle route signs, given the perpendicular parking on the opposite side of the street.



Figure 8: The paved width of Ocean Avenue provides an opportunity to sign a bicycle route.

- B. Use bicycle route signage on Washington Avenue from Tunney to Brinley as an alternative to Route 35, providing access north and south through the neighborhood. This route would provide connecting routes to the business district, shopping center and back bay areas with east-west connections at Brinley, 2nd, 3rd, 6th Coolidge, Harding, and Tunney.



Figure 9: Washington Avenue offers a lightly traveled two-way route for bicycle use and a 25 mph speed limit, which makes it bicycle friendly.

- C. 3rd Avenue (shown at right) runs in both directions and has a traffic light at the intersection with 35 North. There is a striped out lane (5' wide "gore") adjacent to the south side of 3rd Avenue from Route 35 south to Ocean Avenue that was intended by the Township to serve both pedestrians and cyclists. There may be other opportunities to employ this technique along other recommended routes to accommodate both bicycles and pedestrians heading to the beach in the eastward direction, provided that important on-street parking can be maintained.



- D. 4th Avenue (Bike Route #4 on the map below) has a wide paved cartway and may be able to accommodate a bicycle/pedestrian route that would provide connection east to west. A travel speed limit of 25mph or less would make the street bicycle friendly.



- E. Fielder Avenue (Bike Route #5 in Figure 5), shown below, is the first two-way road in the south end of the Ortle Beach Neighborhood that extends all the way from Bay Boulevard to Ocean Avenue and is a popular route for pedestrians to walk or bike across the island to the beach. Harding Avenue is the first street running through from Bay Boulevard to Ocean Avenue, but is one-way eastbound to the beach, except for the block between Rt. 35N and 35S, which is two-way for purposes of a "U" turn. Harding will likely continue to be used by pedestrians as the most direct route to the beach from the south end of Ortle Beach. However Harding Avenue is not recommended as either a pedestrian or a bicycle route due to the conflict with the two-way vehicular traffic in the block between Rt. 35 North and South. Pedestrians and cyclists should be encouraged through route signs and other techniques to use safer routes than Harding Avenue to the beach.



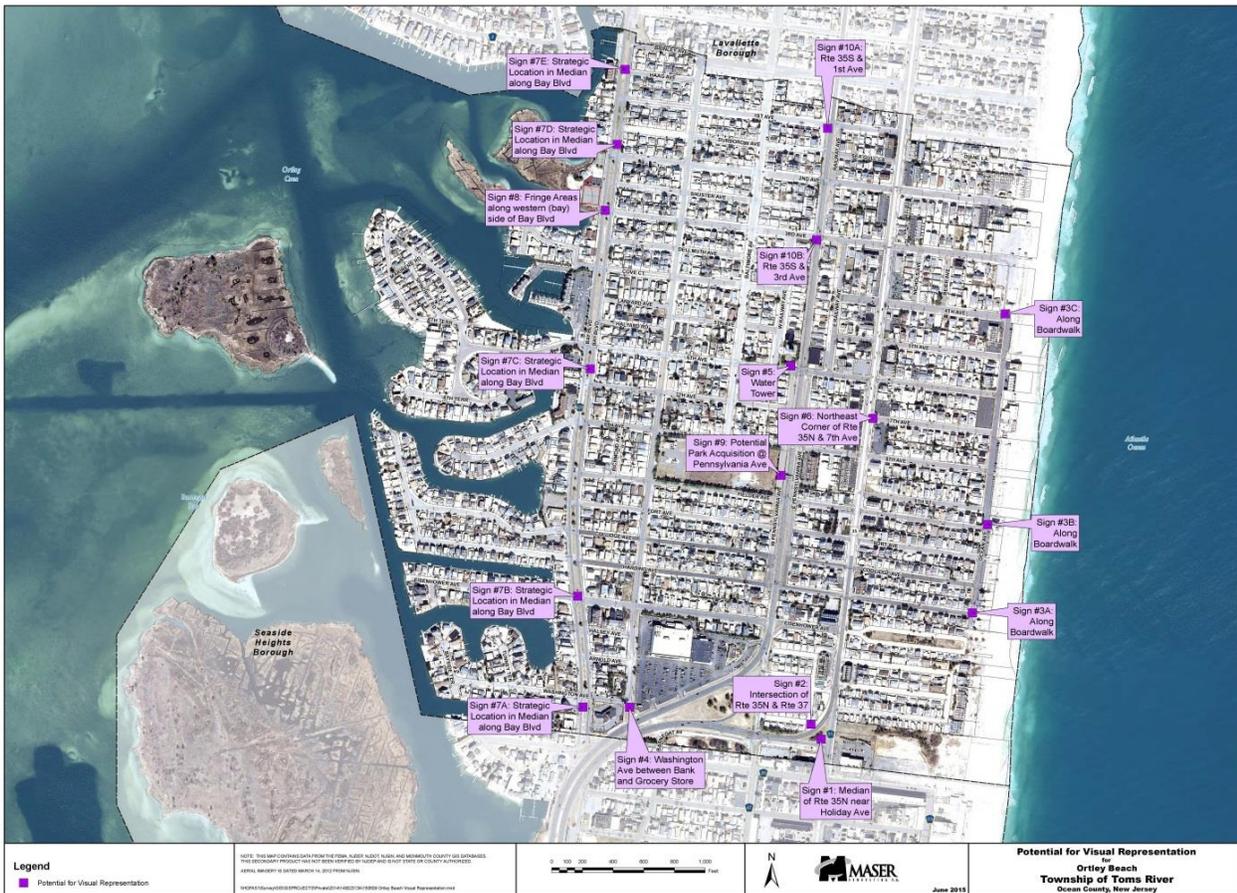


Figure 10: MAP OF RECOMMENDED VISUAL ENHANCEMENT LOCATIONS

VISUAL ENHANCEMENTS

Above is the overall Potential Areas for Visual Enhancements (gateway treatments, art, landscaping, etc.) that might be located in the areas of highest visibility while providing a sense of identity and wayfinding for Ortley Beach. This would be the major entries to the community on Route 37 and the transition to Route 35 North as well as strategic locations within the town, such as Bayside Park, the Beach and the base of the water tower.

During the planning process, it was clear that the image of the dolphins on the water tower was meaningful to residents. They identified with the dolphin image as a theme for the Neighborhood that would distinguish it from the Borough of Lavellette to the north and Seaside Heights to the south and could be repeated in sculpture, public art such as wall murals and signage. It was developed in this Neighborhood Plan as a place making strategy and as a way of fostering public involvement. This strategy proved successful in downtown Toms River, where wall murals are currently visible throughout the downtown based on a design competition.

Figure 10 provides suggested locations for these visual enhancements. A more detailed description of these locations for providing attractive gateway treatments, settings for outdoor art/sculpture and enhancements to streetscape and roadside landscaping follow below.



Figure 11: Area from the Visual Enhancements Map at the southerly gateway to Ortle Beach from Seaside Heights

SOUTH GATEWAY

Visual enhancement locations at the gateways to Ortle Beach at the south end of the Neighborhood include:

1. An area on the left side of the intersection of Routes 37-35N around Holiday Road (Sign #2 in Figure 11).
2. The median in the same area (35N near Holiday) where the existing Ortle Beach sign is located. This is within the Right of Way of the two routes and will need to consider the visibility of this area in the actual design (Sign #1 in Figure 11).



Figure 12: Photo of existing gateway sign (Sign #1 in Figure 11).

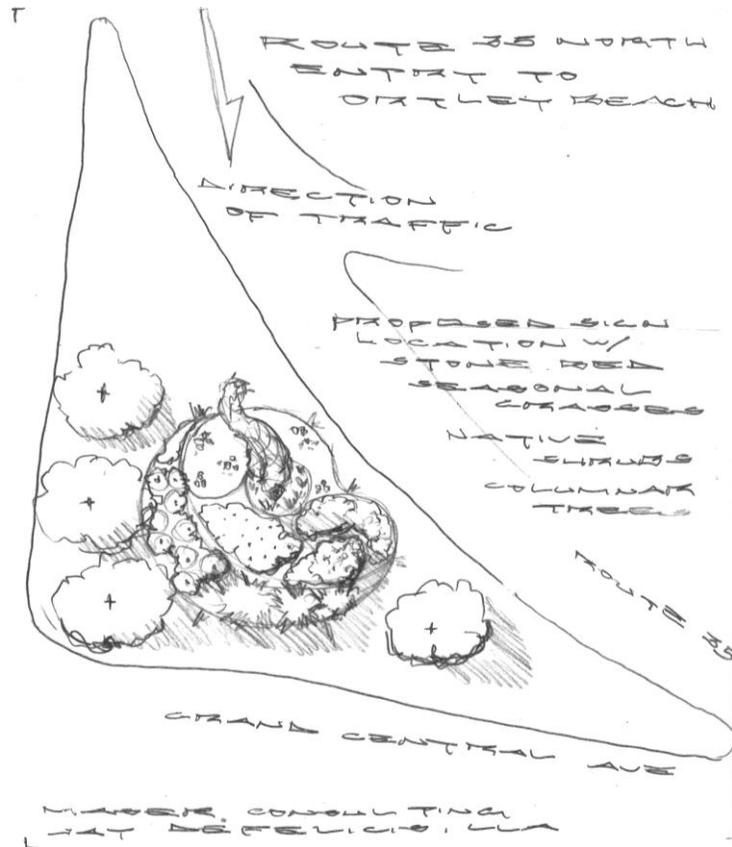


Figure 13: Proposed landscape planting in the location of Sign #1. Plantings within the NJDOT ROW would be designed in accordance with NJDOT safety standards, including preserving sightlines, and would require NJDOT approval.

3. A large open turf-covered berm within the Public Right of Way at the terminus of what would be the extension of Washington Avenue and Route 37, between the bank and the A&P/ACME grocery store (shown as Sign #4 in Figure 11). If the ROW has been vacated, an easement would be required from the property owner (s).



Figure 14: Location shown as Sign #4 in Figure 11.

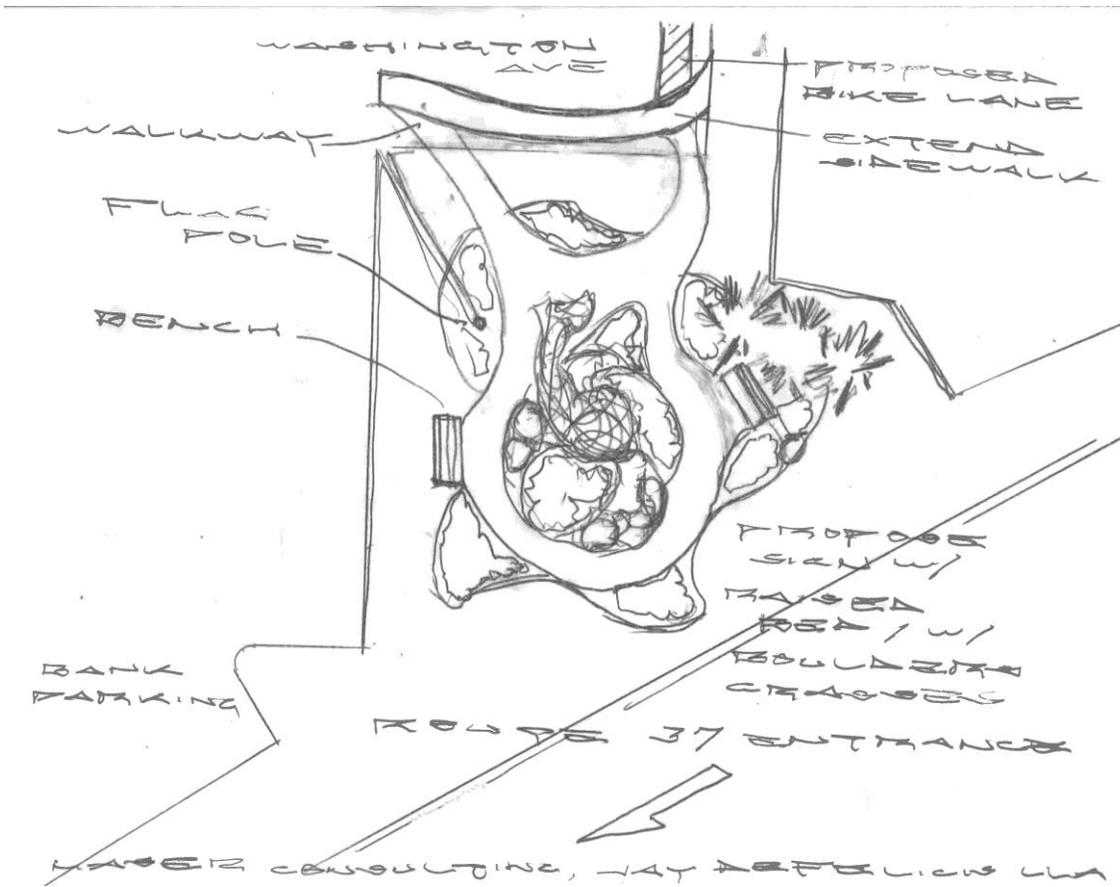


Figure 15: Proposed Passive Park Sign location at Route 37 and Washington Ave, with Flagpole and seating (Sign #4 in Figure 11).

CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Visual enhancement locations identified in the central part of the neighborhood are shown in Figure 17 below and include:

1. Bay Boulevard at the terminus of 3rd Avenue adjacent to the Bayside Park
2. The area around the bottom of the water tower at the northwest corner of Route 35S and 6th Avenue. This location would require permission or an easement from the property owner.



Figure 16: Sketch of a dolphin sculpture and plantings at the base of the water tower (Sign #5 in Figure 17).



Figure 17: Central Neighborhood Visual Enhancement Locations.

3. Strategic locations along the center planted median area of Bay Boulevard, such as in the vicinity of Bayside Park. Bay Boulevard is a County Roadway, therefore any proposed improvements in this area will need to be approved and coordinated with Ocean County Engineering. There were preliminary discussions with the County about modifications to the planted median in Bay Boulevard and the primary concern was regarding the use of the median for a bikepath. Residents have already “adopted” portions of the median by adding new plantings, but a more formalized program needs to be proposed to the County so that the plantings in the Ortley Beach median in Bay Boulevard match the quality of the plantings in the median of the Lavallette segment of Bay Boulevard.
4. Potential fringe areas along the western (Bay) side of Bay Boulevard, for example, Bay at 7th Avenue, Bay at 6th and Halyard Avenue (Sign #8 in Figure 17).



Figure 18: Sketch of dolphin sculpture in fringe areas along the Bay side of Bay Boulevard.

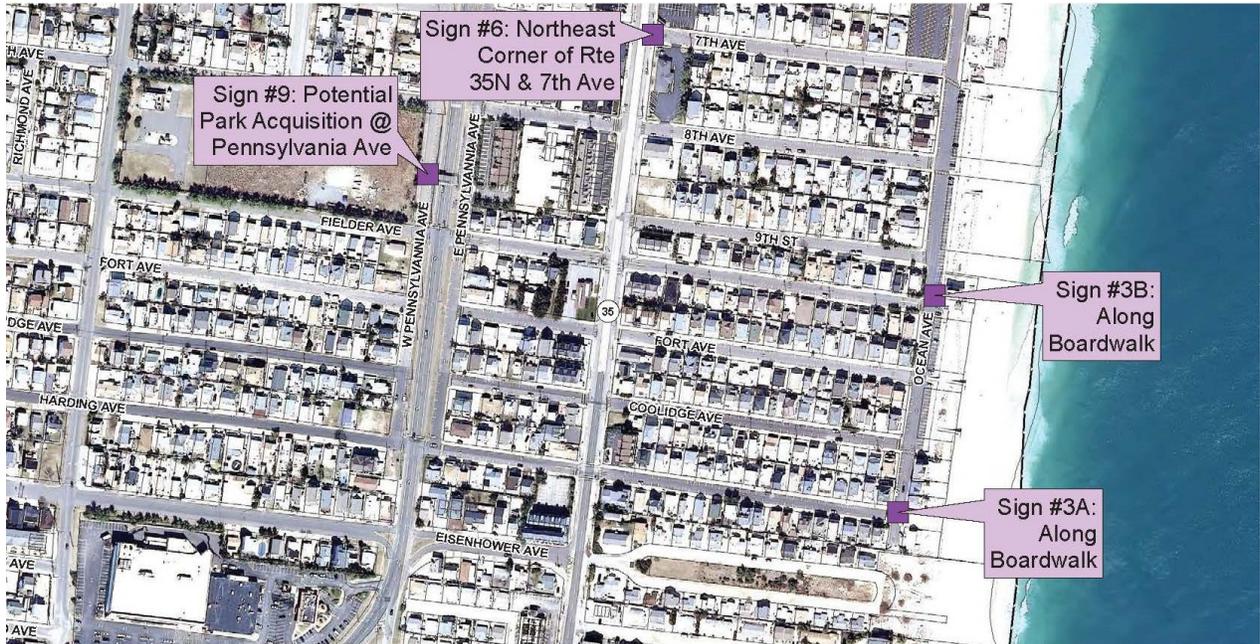


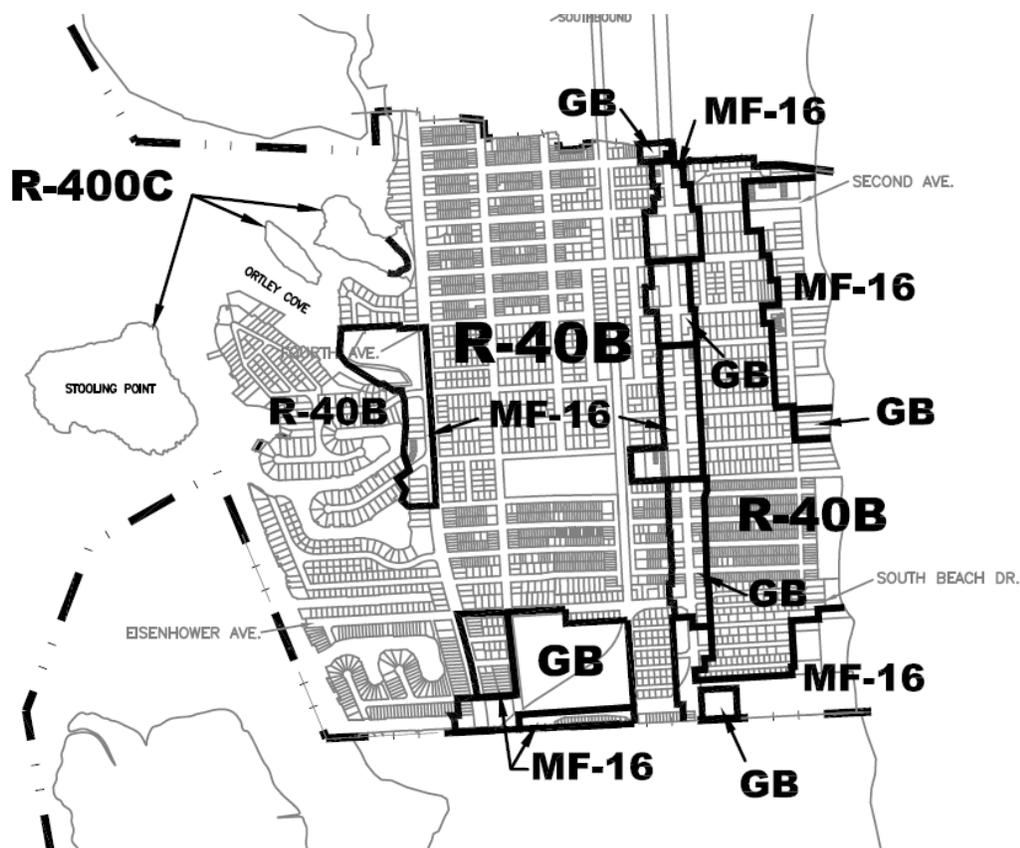
Figure 19: Southeast Neighborhood Visual Enhancements Locations.

SOUTHEAST NEIGHBORHOOD

Visual enhancement locations identified in the central part of the neighborhood are shown in Figure 19 and include:

1. A large lot between Washington Avenue and W. Pennsylvania Avenue, and between 8th Avenue and Fielder Avenue (shown as Sign #9 in Figure 19) that is part of the Ocean County Utilities Authority (OCUA) property. There have been expressions of interest by the OBVTA that a portion of this property along Route 35S be dedicated for public use as a passive park or green space, but there are no indications that the OCUA would agree to allow a portion of that property to be a public green space.
2. Locations along the boardwalk (Sign #3A and #3B in Figure 19), as well as the planted median within Eisenhower Avenue between 35N and Vision Beach.

ZONING ANALYSIS



Map 2: Zoning Map for Ortley Beach

Since the majority of the neighborhood falls within the R-40B Zone, this Neighborhood Plan focuses on design standards for the R-40B Zone. Presently, the bulk standards for the R-40B Zone are:

- Minimum lot area –
 - Single Family (SF) Dwellings 4,000 SF
 - Two Family (TF) Dwellings 6,000 SF
- Minimum lot width: SF – 40 feet
TF – 60 feet
- Minimum lot depth: – 100 feet
- Minimum front yard setback: 20 feet or 20% of lot depth
- Minimum rear yard setback: 20 feet or 20% of lot depth (with depth exceptions under 70 feet)
- Minimum side yard setback : 4 feet with 2 combined yards not less than 12 feet
- Maximum principal building coverage: Lot Area Up to 2,000 sf: 47 ½ %
Lot Area Over to 2,000 sf: 950 sf plus 25 %
- Maximum height : 35 feet
- Maximum Impervious Surface Coverage: Twice the maximum building coverage, not to exceed 90% (0.9)
- Maximum Floor Area Ratio: Twice the maximum building coverage, Not to exceed 0.8 (80% of lot area).

When dealing with raising a home to meet the established Base Flood Elevations (“BFEs”), residents in many flood damaged areas run into issues with building height, coverage and setbacks. Homes in Ortley Beach had previously been required to have a 20 foot front yard and a 20 foot rear yard. However, lot depth varies within the neighborhood from 40 to 100 feet. Therefore, a lot that is only 40 feet deep was not able to meet the rear or front yard setback requirement. In fact, a lot that is 60 feet deep had only be able to construct a house that is 20 feet deep, which is impractical. To address this issue when faced with the rebuilding of hundreds of homes after Sandy, the Township amended R40-B regulations in 2013 so that the minimum requirement for the front yard for a lot with a depth of 70 feet or less was changed from 20 feet to the lesser of 20% of lot depth or the prevailing front setback. This seems to have addressed the issue for the majority of property owners. These zoning amendments were a benefit when a homeowner applied for approvals to raise their home to avoid the Post-Sandy flood insurance premiums.

Toms River Township also addressed the height issue in 2013 by amending the definition of “Building Height” to measure allowable height from the “one-hundred-year base flood elevation”. However, the Township experienced a flood of applications to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for side yard variances on undersized lots for elevated and reconstructed homes after Sandy, mainly because the new construction was a larger home than what was on the lot pre-Sandy. The Township responded to the trend of over-building by adopting an ordinance that established a maximum “Floor Area Ratio” for single family homes which linked the maximum size of the home to the size of the lot and elevated any variance relief to that under NJSA 40:55D-70-d, thereby requiring five affirmative votes of the Board rather than a simple majority. Since that ordinance amendment the trend has reportedly subsided.

Another issue that confronts property owners when elevating or reconstructing their homes is the conventional regulations regarding “yards” when the entrances to the homes are a story or more above grade, requiring additional stairs in mostly confined yard areas. Most zoning ordinances define a “yard” as a required open space on a lot between a lot line and building or structure, which is unoccupied and unobstructed from grade to sky. Section 348-5.5 of the Toms River Land Use and Development Regulations states: *“Unroofed entrance porches, decks, balconies or terraces which do not rise above the height of 36 inches may extend into any required side or rear yard. Unroofed entrance porches, decks, balconies or terraces which do not rise above the height of 12 inches may extend into any required front yard. Notwithstanding the limitations set forth in this subsection, stairs and handicapped ramps may extend into the rear or one side yard, provided that a minimum of three feet of access remains in the other side yard.”* There are a variety of stairway designs to transition from the finished grade of an elevated or reconstructed house to the entrance doors, which are often more than 10 feet above the ground. It would require about 17 steps to cover a rise of 10 feet based on the diagram in Figure 10 below, which would require about 14 feet of run. Straight run of steps to the front door would then frequently require front yard variance relief.

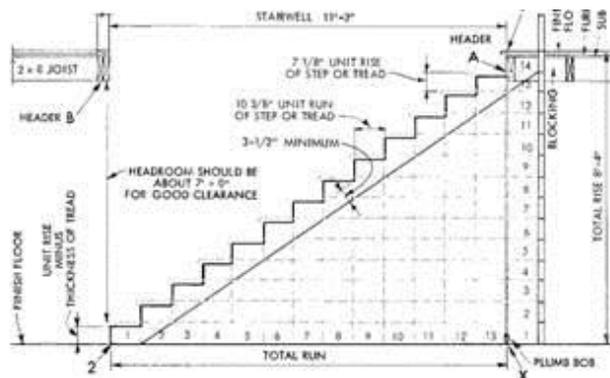


Figure 20: Typical riser and tread dimensions to cover a height of 8.33 feet.

Breaking up the run of entry stairways to elevated homes with one or more landings provides for a more attractive transition, but also requires more space. Zoning amendments were adopted by the Township to address this need, and landings and stairs are now allowed in the front yard, provided that a setback of three feet is maintained. Specifically, the Township’s amendment to § 348-5.5.1A by Ord. No. 4403-13 reads as follows:

“A. In addition to the provisions for decks that are found in § 348-5.5C and D of this chapter, a landing area at the top of stairs leading to an entry of the dwelling shall be permitted in the required yard area, subject to the following restrictions:

- (1) The entry serves the first habitable floor.*
- (2) The total area of any landing serving a single entry shall not exceed 40 square feet.*
- (3) The landings and stairs shall be unroofed.*
- (4) The landings and stairs shall be no closer than three feet to any property line.*
- (5) The landings and stairs shall be no closer than 10 feet to any body of water”*

Additional consideration for dealing with transitioning to elevated entrances similar to the provisions made in the current ordinance for handicapped ramps could help to simplify the recovery process for property owners.

These changes in the ordinance could work to help homeowners who are trying to raise their home. However, the Design Standards section of this Plan offers additional bulk standard recommendations for consideration by the Township as well as design guidelines.

The only other two Zoning Designations in this area of the Township are: GB (General Business) located along the Route 35 corridor mostly, and MF16 (Multi-Family) zoning scattered along the main central corridor and at locations by the bay and seashore.

BULK RECOMMENDATIONS

After reviewing the R40B Zone’s bulk standards, this Neighborhood Plan recommends the following be considered by the Township for the Ortley Beach Neighborhood:

Flexible Side Yard Setbacks.

Lot widths vary greatly within Ortley Beach. Presently the code requires one side yard to be 4 feet wide and the width the combined side yards to be not less than 12 feet in the R-40A and R-40B Zones that cover the neighborhoods in Ortley Beach. A lot that is 30 feet in width would be restricted to a building envelope that is only 18 feet wide, which is not practical or desired in today’s residential designs.

In order to address the above, we studied the lot sizes in Ortley Beach to consider whether there should be consideration given to reducing the combined side yard setbacks to 10 feet for lots with a width less than 40 feet, provided that the resulting home would not exceed 20 feet in width and further provided that they do not exceed the recently adopted FAR limitations to prevent overbuilding. We found that the R-40A and R-40B uses a 40 foot width as a standard because in the blocks running generally south of Fielder Avenue have original subdivided lots of 20 feet in width that are generally combined into lots of 40 feet in width, although a number of lots are narrower than 40 feet. The blocks north of Fielder Avenue have prevailing lot widths of 50 feet in width and the existing required side yards should not be an impediment to rebuilding. Given insufficient evidence of a serious lot width issue based on our analysis of the tax maps, we concluded that any issues regarding a hardship for side yards and combined side yards would be best addressed by the Zoning Board of Adjustment rather than amending the lot standards in the Zoning Ordinance.

Flexible principal building coverage.

The R-40B zoning district regulations now permit a principal building coverage of 47.5% for undersized lots, which helps to minimize the need for bulk variance relief for property owners seeking to rebuild. It may be worth consideration to allow extremely undersized lots (perhaps lots less than 3,000 square feet) a larger maximum principal building coverage, for example, 50% or 55%. This would allow a lot that is 30 feet by 50 feet to construct a home that has a first floor with 750 or 825 square feet. As the need for parking in Ortley Beach was stressed as a priority by the residents, this flexibility should only be considered where parking can be accommodated and the recently adopted FAR limitations are met in order to prevent overbuilding. Given insufficient evidence of a prevailing lot area nonconformity based on our analysis of the tax maps, we again believe that issues regarding a hardship for lot size would be best addressed by the Zoning Board of Adjustment rather than amending the lot standards in the Zoning Ordinance.

As has been explained above, the Township has already taken great strides to amend the Land Use and Development Regulations to assist homeowners who are rebuilding. The objective in this Neighborhood Plan is to continue the balance between easing the process of recovery with the need to maintain the integrity of neighborhood character as it goes through its transformation to more resiliency. The collaboration to date between the Township and property owners in Ortley Beach to achieve this balance is commendable.

Business Zones

The General Business Zone (GB) governs the rehabilitation and rebuilding of businesses in Ortley Beach. The Township advised that virtually all of the businesses in Ortley Beach were flooded during Sandy. While some buildings were lost entirely, most have renovated the areas damaged by flooding. While setbacks and coverage in the GB District have not been substantial impediments to recovery, businesses that exceed the standard in the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance for “substantial rehabilitation” (50% of building value) are required to flood proof the areas below the Design Flood Elevation (Base Flood Elevation plus any freeboard required by ordinance). Flood proofing can either be “dry” (keep flood waters out of the building using flood barriers) or “wet” (allowing flood waters to enter the space, but to pass through a system of vents or other design elements).

DESIGN GUIDELINES

The recovery of the Ortley Beach neighborhood in a way that provides for greater resiliency against flooding will involve the elevation of existing residential buildings as a result of recovery grant programs, as well as the elevation of new construction based on compliance with the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. The following design guidelines are intended to integrate elevated buildings with existing non-elevated residences to soften the visual impact on the neighborhood.

ELEVATION OF BUILDINGS

The raising of residential homes is usually accomplished by either the use of pilings or by increasing the height of foundations and crawl spaces by adding courses of masonry block. To the extent that property owners determine to increase the elevation of the lowest habitable floor to the “Design Base Flood Elevation” in the Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance (Best Available Base Flood Elevation plus freeboard), the height difference between the grade and the first floor can be considerable, causing a design challenge to access the elevated building. Depending on the size of the lot and the density of the building pattern in the neighborhood, the solutions to the challenge of providing access varies from a straight run of stairs to a progression of porches or landings (see Figure 21).



Figure 21: Illustrations of various ways to design access to elevated first living floors of residential buildings, some which frame the piles and others that partially or completely "skirt" or wrap the piles for garage/storage space or use raised foundations. The top left image shows a raised concrete block foundation with a side stair in a shallow front yard. The top center and top right images show pilings skirted with sheetrock. The lower left image shows pilings that are boxed in as an architectural feature with parking underneath. The lower center and lower right drawings depict additional designs to break up the stairway to the front entrance, with the lower right image also suggesting a stone facing of the pilings. The cost of these approaches will vary, but will increase with the number of landings in the stairway design and in the materials used.

The desirability of requiring such design standards as concealing exposed piles with framing or skirting, avoiding straight run stairs without a landing every so many steps will need to be balanced with the eligible costs of elevating homes covered under the various disaster relief programs so that they do not become a financial burden on property owners. The Township is currently developing guidance on alternatives, but does not mandate the enclosure of pilings.

GENERAL APPEARANCE FROM STREET

Within the residential blocks, every effort should be made to provide designs for the newly elevated homes that will work within the context of the existing lot lines and setbacks to enhance the overall character of the neighborhood. A number of visual ideas are provided below to act as representative examples of what can be done. There have been some examples constructed within the neighborhood as part of the Sandy recovery which embody these ideas.



Figure 22: Upper set of illustrations shows potential streetscape treatment of narrow and deep lots using trees with vase shaped or columnar habit, while lower pair shows wider lots with street trees of spreading habit in larger spaces and narrower habit in more confined spaces between houses. Homes are shown as representative for the size of lots as elevated for flood resiliency.

LANDSCAPE:

Another approach to softening the visual impact of newly elevated buildings is to mask the exposed areas around the piles with landscaping. However, the present conditions caused by the elevation of housing and smaller setbacks will require that the landscaping installed needs to not only survive within the seashore environment, but may need to be compact and columnar in nature when used with narrow lot configurations. This may restrict the plant palette that can be used.

The following are some selections that may work well in both residential and business settings, but any planting directly in line of prevailing winds will struggle.

Small trees

- Red Maple (*Acer Rubrum*)
- Allegheny service-berry (*Amelanchier laevis*)
- Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*)
- Black Cherry (*Prunus serotina*)
- American mountain ash (*Sorbus americana*)

Large shrubs

- Indigo bush (*Amorpha fruticosa*)
- Coastal sweet pepperbush (*Clethra alnifolia*)
- Bigleaf Hydrangea (*Hydrangea macrophylla*)
- Northern bayberry (*Morella pensylvanica*)
- Beach Plum (*Prunus maritima*)

Evergreens (for screening)

- Atlantic White Cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*)
- American Holly (*Ilex opaca*)
- Eastern Red Cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)

Perennials (for decorative filler planting)

- Yarrow (*Achillea*)
- Coreopsis
- Daylily (*Hemerocallis*)
- Lavender (*Lavandula*)
- Foxglove (*Digitalis*)
- Summer Phlox (*Phlox paniculata*)
- Stonecrop (*Sedum spurium*)

Ornamental Grasses (for filler and accent)

- Fescue Grass (*Festuca*)
- Switch Grass (*Panicum*)
- Fountain Grass (*Pennisetum*)

Groundcovers (for filler and accent)

- Creeping Juniper (*Juniperus horizontalis*)
- Beach Heather (in full sun)
- Stone (mixed decorative gravel and larger rock for accent)

PUBLIC SPACES & BUSINESS DISTRICT STREETScape:

The plant materials recommended above can also be used in plantings within public spaces such as road medians, tree lawns (the space between the curb and sidewalk or between the sidewalk and a parking lot or front property line), passive park spaces and similar spaces identified in Figure 9 (Map of Visual Enhancement Locations). The use of the softer palette of plantings such as ornamental grasses and perennials, combined with the use of stone groundcover can help to enhance the beachfront theme for these spaces in Ortley Beach and could be relatively easily maintained by the OBVTA and Ortley Beach property owners.

The images that follow are representations of various designs using these plant materials



Figure 23: Grasses and perennials used with gravel to provide color and definition to public spaces.



Figure 24: Grasses and groundcovers can be used to soften roadside spaces and add visual interest to public spaces.



Figure 25: Where space permits, perennials and ornamental grasses can be combined with conventional shade trees and shrubs to enhance commercial streetscapes.

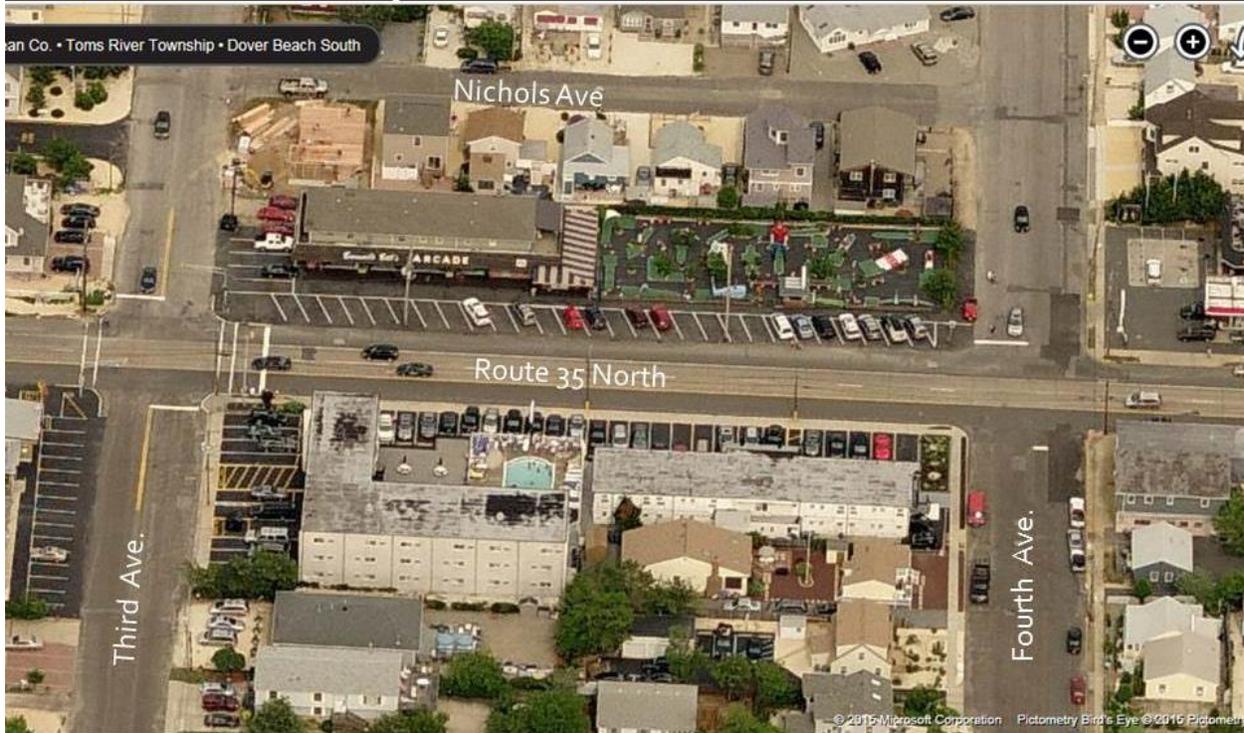
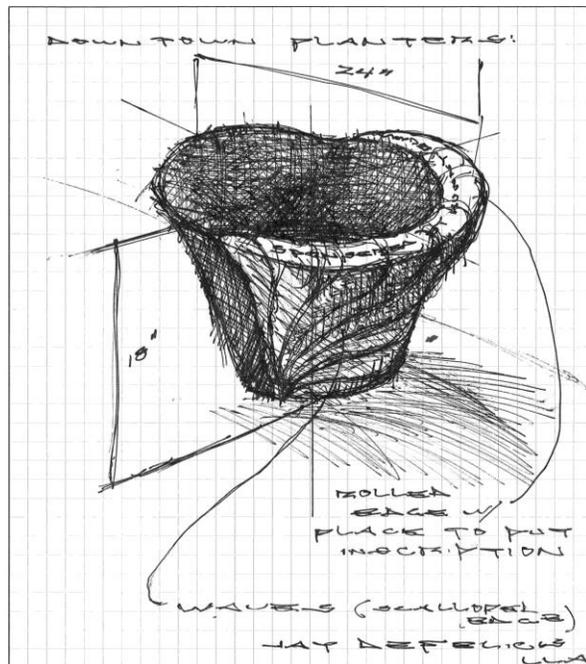


Figure 26: Sections of the business district along Route 35 North, such as is shown above, have no sidewalks due to the reliance on the public right of way for parking. In these areas the use of a "signature" planter such as that illustrated below would enable the planting of annuals and perennials within customized planters that would be sponsored by the individual businesses.



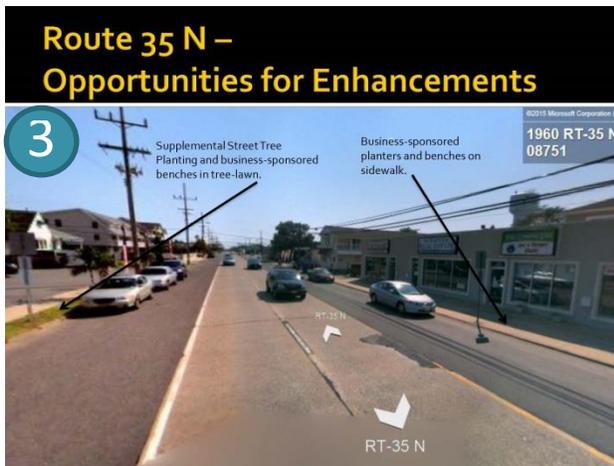


Figure 27: Images above from Bing.com predate the recent addition of bikelanes along Route Route 35 N in Ortley Beach, which in some places are lined and signed and in other locations are marked with painted lane markers.

The options for enhancements to the visual quality of the Route 35 corridors through the Ortley Beach neighborhood of the Township of Toms River are shown graphically above and are described as follows:

1. The “berm” sections of the Route 35 South ROW can be planted with supplemental street trees beyond any that are installed by NJDOT. There are relatively few street trees anticipated based on versions of plans made available to date. These trees would need to be approved by the Township Forester and planted in accordance with NJDOT “adopt a median” and NJDOT “wildflower” procedures;
2. Where block frontages along Route 35 North lack curbs or sidewalks, enhancements would need to occur on private property, either adjacent to the parking stalls or in existing painted medians at building entrances or walkways;

SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY: LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (“LEED”) is a recognized green building certification rating system. LEED provides third-party verification that a new or renovated building was designed and built using strategies and materials to lower a building’s carbon footprint. LEED was developed by the U.S. Green Building Council and is a “voluntary rating system that encourages buildings to do better, but does not add significant cost”.¹ LEED has five rating systems for multiple project types that want to achieve LEED certification. The rating systems are:

- Building Design and Construction
- Interior Design and Construction
- Buildings Operations and Maintenance
- Neighborhood Development
- Homes

Within each rating systems there are eight main credit categories:

- Location and transportation
- Sustainable sites
- Water efficiency
- Energy and atmosphere
- Materials and resources
- Indoor environmental quality
- Innovation
- Regional priority

LEED “provides building owners and operators with a framework for identifying and implementing practical and measurable green building design, construction, operations and maintenance solutions”.² Furthermore, LEED has been constantly improving its manuals and guidelines to keep up with technology and trends. Presently, there are four levels of LEED certification – certified, silver, gold and platinum.

This Neighborhood Plan focuses on two of the rating systems that could apply – LEED for Homes (LEED-Homes) and LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND).

¹ <http://www.usgbc.org/articles/leed-facts>

² <http://www.usgbc.org/articles/about-leed>

LEED FOR HOMES

LEED for Homes is the certification program for single-family home design and construction. LEED-designed homes provide clean indoor air and use less energy and water, which translates to lower utility bills. Homeowners looking to rehabilitate or redevelop their damaged home can use the LEED for Homes credit system to make smart choices when it comes to water efficiency, energy usage, material selection, air quality and even rainwater management. LEED for Homes is an excellent resource for homeowners, even if they are not seeking LEED Certification.

Credits that are worth noting, and that which could be utilized by the residents of the Ortley Beach Neighborhood during rehabilitation and new home construction include:

- Rainwater management
 - Certain sections flood after a hard rain storm, let alone a hurricane. Reducing rainwater runoff is imperative.
 - LEED for Homes recommends the following actions to manage rainwater:
 - Planting areas with native or adapted plant material (e.g. trees shrubs)
 - Installing a vegetated roof
 - Using permeable paving
 - Installing permanent infiltration or collection features (e.g., vegetated swale, rain garden, rainwater cistern or rain barrels to capture roof runoff)
- Low-emitting materials
 - The intent of this LEED credit is to reduce concentrations of chemical contaminants that can impact air quality.
 - The requirement includes the use of low volatile organic compound (“VOC”) paints, floor materials and insulation.
- Quality views
 - Part of the appeal of the Ortley Beach Neighborhood is that it is surrounded by waterfront views. The purpose of this LEED credit is to give building occupants a connection to the natural outdoor environment providing quality views.
 - The requirement is to achieve a direct line of sight to the outdoors with glazing (e.g. windows and doors) for 75% of the regularly occupied floor area of the home.
- Green power and carbon offsets
 - LEED for Homes encourages homeowner to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions through the use of grid-source, renewable energy technologies.
 - In order to qualify for the credits, a homeowner must engage in a contract for a minimum of five years, which provides between 50% and 100% of the home’s energy from green power or renewable energy certificates.

- Renewable energy production

- In order to offset the rising costs of homeownership, this LEED credit relies on the sun to power homes. The Ortley Beach Neighborhood is ideally situated for both solar and wind systems, as the nature of the sea air and high wind levels limits large vegetation in what is largely a grassland (salt marsh) ecosystem. In addition the Ortley Beach street grid is oriented so that the long portions of the blocks face south (about 10 degrees west of due south). Optimal solar orientation for temperate climate zones is 17.5 degrees east of due south.³ LEED-ND Credit 10 under Green Infrastructure and Building (GIB C-10) provides for credit when the long side of the street block is 15 degrees or less east or west of due south, or if the long axis of 75% or more of the buildings are 15 degrees or less east or west of due south. The Ortley Beach street grid would meet the LEED-ND standard.

- Areas with annual average wind speeds around 6.5 meters per second and greater at an 80-m height are generally considered to have a wind resource suitable for wind development. The Wind Speed Map indicates that the Neighborhood is between 6.5 and 7.0 meters per second.

- This credit is offered to homeowners if they meet the parameters for solar energy.

- Indoor water use reduction

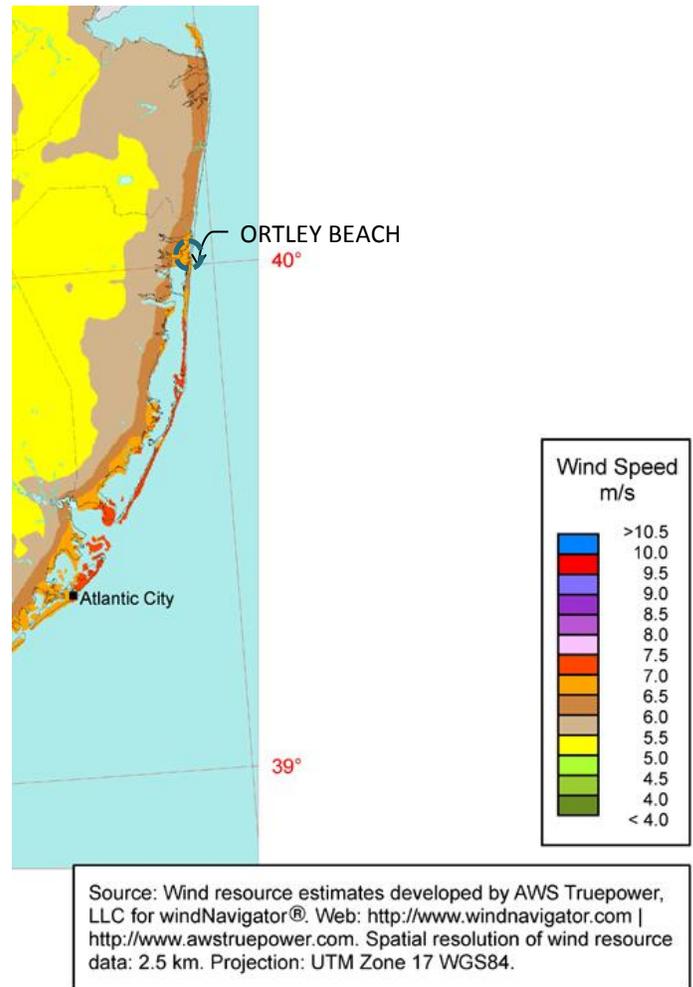
- The intent of this LEED credit is to reduce indoor water consumption.
- Homeowners can receive up to six points for this line item depending on how much they reduce their water usage.

- Daylight

- Daylighting is important in connecting building occupants to the outdoors, reinforcing circadian rhythms and reducing the use of electrical lighting.
- The requirement is to achieve at least 55% daylighting for the regularly occupied floor area of the home.

- Outdoor water use reduction

- The intent of this LEED credit is to reduce outdoor water consumption.



³ Design With Climate, by Victor Olgay, Princeton University Press, 1973, page 61.

- Homeowners receive credit if they reduce exterior irrigation between 50% and 100% by installing plants that require no irrigation (e.g. native species) or an efficient irrigation system with a water sense feature.

LEED FOR NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

LEED for Neighborhood Development or LEED-ND is a certification system for a neighborhood-scale project, such as the entire Ortley Beach area. LEED-ND incorporates the principles of smart growth, urbanism and green building into a system for neighborhood design, which can be applied to entire neighborhoods, portions of neighborhoods or multiple neighborhoods.

There are five credit categories for LEED-ND:

- Smart location and linkage
- Neighborhood pattern and design
- Green infrastructure and buildings
- Innovation and design process
- Regional priority credit

Figure 28: LEED-ND Checklist Chart

| LEED v4 for Neighborhood Development Plan Project Checklist | | | | Project Name: _____ Date: _____ | | | |
|---|---|----|--|------------------------------------|---|----|--|
| Yes | ? | No | | Yes | ? | No | |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | Smart Location & Linkage 28 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Green Infrastructure & Buildings 31 |
| Y | | | Prereq Smart Location Required | Y | | | Prereq Certified Green Building Required |
| Y | | | Prereq Impaired Species and Ecological Communities Required | Y | | | Prereq Minimum Building Energy Performance Required |
| Y | | | Prereq Wetland and Water Body Conservation Required | Y | | | Prereq Indoor Water Use Reduction Required |
| Y | | | Prereq Agricultural Land Conservation Required | Y | | | Prereq Construction Activity Pollution Prevention Required |
| Y | | | Prereq Floodplain Avoidance Required | | | | Credit Certified Green Buildings 5 |
| | | | Credit Preferred Locations 10 | | | | Credit Optimize Building Energy Performance 2 |
| | | | Credit Brownfield Remediation 2 | | | | Credit Indoor Water Use Reduction 1 |
| | | | Credit Access to Quality Transit 7 | | | | Credit Outdoor Water Use Reduction 2 |
| | | | Credit Bicycle Facilities 2 | | | | Credit Building Reuse 1 |
| | | | Credit Housing and Jobs Proximity 3 | | | | Credit Historic Resource Preservation and Adaptive Reuse 2 |
| | | | Credit Steep Slope Protection 1 | | | | Credit Minimized Site Disturbance 1 |
| | | | Credit Site Design for Habitat or Wetland and Water Body Conservation 1 | | | | Credit Rainwater Management 4 |
| | | | Credit Restoration of Habitat or Wetlands and Water Bodies 1 | | | | Credit Heat Island Reduction 1 |
| | | | Credit Long-Term Conservation Management of Habitat or Wetlands and Water Bodies 1 | | | | Credit Solar Orientation 1 |
| | | | | | | | Credit Renewable Energy Production 3 |
| | | | | | | | Credit District Heating and Cooling 2 |
| | | | | | | | Credit Infrastructure Energy Efficiency 1 |
| | | | | | | | Credit Wastewater Management 2 |
| | | | | | | | Credit Recycled and Reused Infrastructure 1 |
| | | | | | | | Credit Solid Waste Management 1 |
| | | | | | | | Credit Light Pollution Reduction 1 |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | Neighborhood Pattern & Design 41 | 0 | 0 | 0 | Innovation & Design Process 6 |
| Y | | | Prereq Walkable Streets Required | | | | Credit Innovation 5 |
| Y | | | Prereq Compact Development Required | | | | Credit LEED® Accredited Professional 1 |
| Y | | | Prereq Connected and Open Community Required | | | | |
| | | | Credit Walkable Streets 9 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Compact Development 6 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Mixed-Use Neighborhoods 4 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Housing Types and Affordability 7 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Reduced Parking Footprint 1 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Connected and Open Community 2 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Transit Facilities 1 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Transportation Demand Management 2 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Access to Civic & Public Space 1 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Access to Recreation Facilities 1 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Visibility and Universal Design 1 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Community Outreach and Involvement 2 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Local Food Production 1 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Tree-Lined and Shaded Streetscapes 2 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Neighborhood Schools 1 | | | | |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | Regional Priority Credits 4 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Regional Priority Credit: Region Defined 1 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Regional Priority Credit: Region Defined 1 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Regional Priority Credit: Region Defined 1 | | | | |
| | | | Credit Regional Priority Credit: Region Defined 1 | | | | |
| 0 | 0 | 0 | PROJECT TOTALS (Certification estimates) 110 | | | | |
| Certified: 40-49 points, Silver: 50-59 points, Gold: 60-79 points, Platinum: 80+ points | | | | | | | |

Within the categories there are a total of 12 prerequisites that are required to gain certification. One of these conditions includes “smart location and linkage”, which requires the neighborhood to be served by existing water and sewer infrastructure and new development to be on infill sites, near transit or have nearby neighborhood assets. Ortley Beach potentially meets some of these requirements, as it was laid out with a strong street grid that provides for fundamental connectivity, measured in the number of intersections per square mile for intersecting streets, alleys and other pedestrian pathways.

While Ortley is predominantly residential in land use and contains housing types of various densities, there are also several business uses along Route 35 North, which act as a downtown area, and provide some essential services to the residents and season visitors. Available transit to Ortley Beach is currently limited to bus service on Route 35. The potential for water transportation has also been identified and possible public access for water transportation across the Bay could someday connect to the mainland.

All of these characteristics, as compared to the LEED-ND checklist in Figure 18, show that the neighborhood already possesses the basic framework for sustainability (to remain “compact” and to become more “connected” and “complete”). These sustainability principles can be combined with efforts to make the neighborhood more resilient to storm and flood events in the future by elevating buildings and selected streets, as well as investigating longer term solutions to flood mitigation through the use of stormwater management practices. Using the adjacent salt marshes as a potential for managed wetlands for stormwater management is consistent with LEED-ND.

In addition to the overall consistency with LEED-ND, homeowners can also advance the principles of LEED-ND by:

- Improving home energy performance by 5% for new homes or 3% for major building renovations.
- Reduce indoor water usage by 20% with water efficient toilets, faucets and showerheads.
- Reduce outdoor water use through the installation of native plants or smart irrigation systems.
- Reduce rainwater runoff.
- Design and orient new homes for maximum solar orientation.
- Utilize solar power, such as solar panels.

For more information on LEED-ND, go to <http://www.usgbc.org/articles/getting-started-nd>.

SEA LEVEL RISE AND THE FUTURE OF INFRASTRUCTURE

Sea Level Rise

This neighborhood plan for Ortley Beach has been developed to deal with the immediate recovery needs of the neighborhood, as well as to anticipate measures for improving the resiliency of existing and future development to future storm events. However, it is important to recognize that the evidence for the phenomenon of sea level rise is compelling and that Superstorm Sandy may have been a precursor of more frequent and possibly more severe storm events to come in the future, which coupled with a rising sea level could threaten a repeat of the flooding that occurred during Sandy.

The map below estimates the portion of Ortley Beach that would be flooded by a combination of sea level rise and a storm surge and a high tide to a level of two feet. It estimates the impact to be 274 acres, 997 homes and a population of 1602 people.

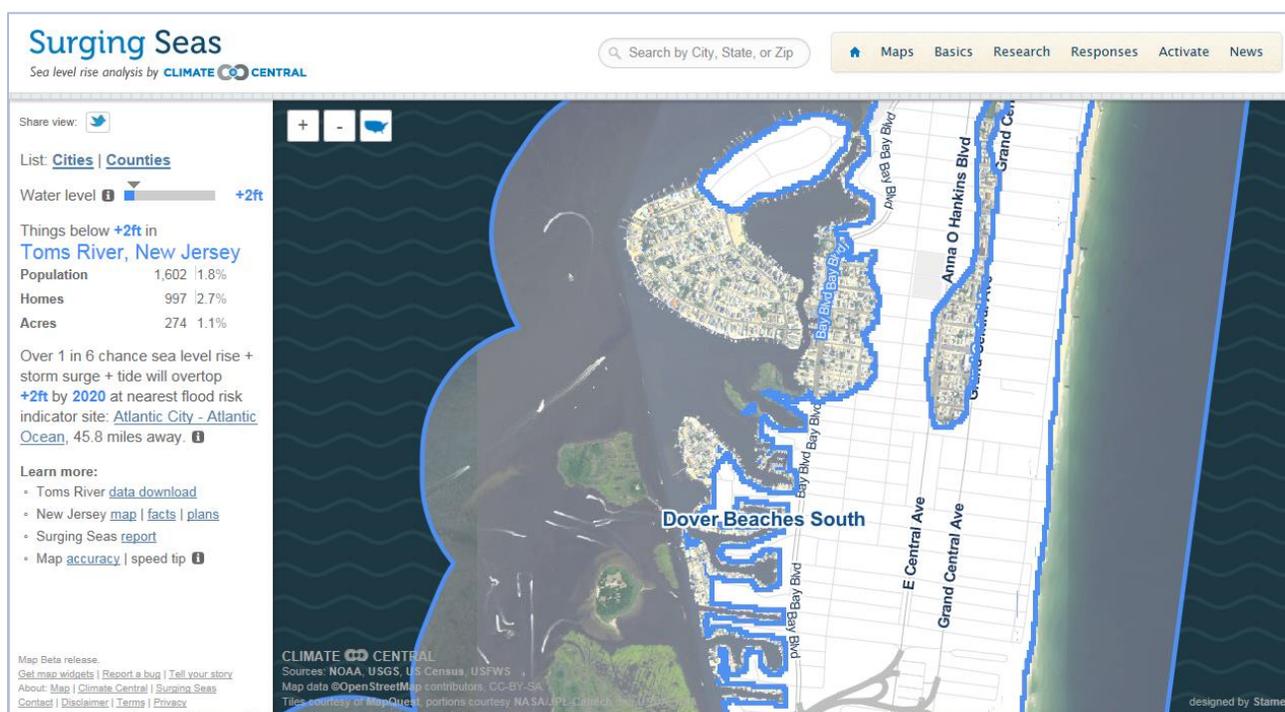


Figure 29: Graphic from climatecentral.org showing the impact of a 2 foot increase due to sea level rise, combined with a storm surge and high tide.

Given the above, we believe the emphasis of this Neighborhood Plan on taking actions to elevate buildings, especially residential buildings, and to protect community facilities (schools, EMS, etc) would be consistent with a shorter range strategy, while elevating roads and improving stormwater management facilities would be consistent with a mid-range strategy. The key to protecting not only Ortley Beach, but the mainland neighborhoods of Toms River Township will be the coordination of beach dune construction and beach replenishment by the Army Corps of Engineers as soon as possible. This was the number one concern of the members of the OBVTA and was echoed by property owners in the mainland lagoon neighborhoods during the development of the SRPR in 2014.

ACTION PLAN

There are a number of relatively low cost actions that can be undertaken through a partnership between the OBVTA and Toms River Township. They are summarized in the table below.

Figure 29: Ortley Beach Neighborhood Plan – ACTION PLAN

| Project | | Responsible Entity | Begin | Estimated Cost | | |
|---------|---|---|---|----------------|-----|------|
| | | | | Low | Mod | High |
| 1. | Gateway Signage | Township Signage Program | Within 2 years, depending on grant funding or private donations | X | | |
| 2. | Landscape Treatments – Adopt Medians | OBVTA with Cooperation from Township, Ocean County, NJDOT | Within 2 years, depending on grant funding or private donations | | X | |
| 3. | Update Zoning Regulations (in conjunction with overall zoning updates anticipated in near future) | Township | Within 1 year | X | | |
| 4. | Wayfinding Signage | Township, NJDOT Grant | Within 3 years | | X | |
| 5. | Planter Program and street lighting for Business District | OBVTA, JCP&L | Within 3 years | | | X |
| 6. | Bike Route System (bicycle route signage on Township roads. | Township, County, NJDOT Grant | Within 2 years | | X | |
| 7. | Kayak launch (if feasible location can be found) | Township, NJDEP | Within 3 years | | X | |

Funding for Actions Items 1, 2, 4 and 5 would be eligible under several NJDOT grant programs and possibly any future rounds of streetscape grant programs through the NJ Economic Development Authority using disaster recovery funding from USHUD. As discussed in this Plan, private sponsoring or donations could begin immediately to “adopt” median strips and create gateway signage treatments at the southerly and northerly approaches to Ortley Beach on Route 35, but permission would be required from NJDOT on Route 35 and Ocean County on Bay Boulevard. Sponsorships or donations to fund planters and benches for the businesses in Ortley Beach could begin immediately, but a project to add or replace street lighting on Route 35N to incorporate decorative pedestrian lighting as recommended in Action Item 5 would require funding and coordination with JCP&L, who would likely provide the fixtures at a reduced cost to attach to the existing poles, as was done on Ocean Avenue along the boardwalk. That project would most likely require grant funding to implement.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT

After conducting several field visits, independently and accompanied by Township staff and OBVTA members, the Maser consultant team developed some conceptual ideas for visual enhancements and placemaking. These ideas included adding attractive art work throughout the community. The OBVTA arranged for a visit by a sculptor, who toured Ortley Beach with the landscape architect from the Maser consultant team to identify suitable locations for displaying outdoor sculpture.

The use of sculpture and art as a place making strategy, as well as the concept of “signage as art” was presented to the OBVTA membership at their June 2015 meeting and was favorably received. It was from this presentation that the idea of using the dolphins currently painted on one side of the water tank as the theme for Ortley Beach was encouraged by the favorable comments received by those who attended the meeting. OBVTA members identified with the frequent presence of schools of dolphins that can be seen swimming near the beach during summer months.

The two presentation boards from the June OBVTA meeting are shown below and illustrate the concepts of the visual enhancements through gateway treatments using a combination of signage and art, as well as the design elements of a bicycle and pedestrian circulation plan for Ortley Beach.



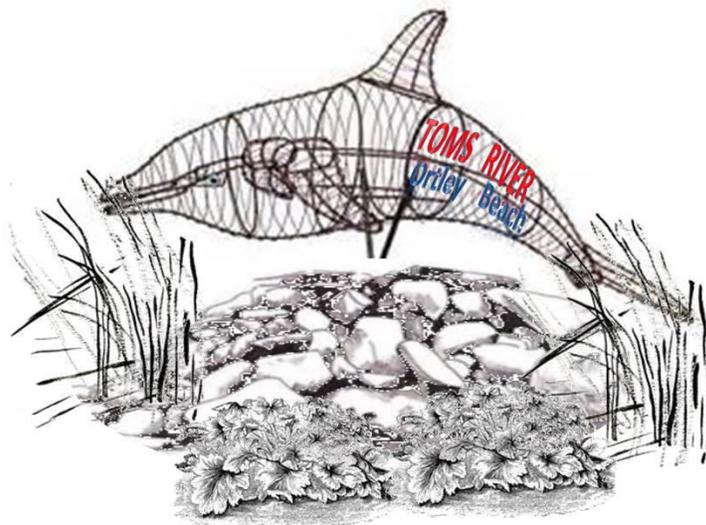


Figure 30: A sketch by the consultant of a dolphin as a visual theme for Ortley Beach, shown in the top board above, was well received by the audience at the public open house. The sculpture was shown as a wire-sculpture, but a design competition might suggest other materials that would be durable and sustainable (wood, metal, concrete, etc). A follow-up sketch, shown above, was developed to advance our recommendation to include “Toms River” into the design of sculpture and signage so as to educate the public on the relationship of Ortley Beach as a beachfront neighborhood within Toms River Township and to encourage unity within Toms River Township as an entire community comprised of a wide variety of neighborhoods. The sketch above includes the incorporation of the sculpture into a gateway treatment with rip-rap stone and a simple planting of perennials and ornamental grasses.

Public Comments from Ortley Beach Public Meetings included:

1. Fielder Avenue is a high used Pedestrian Access Road utilized by young families. Cross walk does not end where it should and vehicles park within the cross walk.
2. Shade trees and plantings with a soft beach feeling should be added to medians and vegetated strips along Route 35N as a gateway into Ortley Beach. These plantings would require NJDOT approval, but might be able to be “adopted” and maintained by OBVTA.
3. Should consider adding a “Welcome to Ortley Beach in the Township of Toms River” sign on Bay Blvd and Route 35 at the Township boundaries with Seaside Heights and Lavallette (gateway treatments).
4. Washington Street floods and people speed. Any elevation of Washington Street should consider side-street flooding such as on Fort Avenue (that already floods).
5. Investigate whether Ocean County would provide permission for additional plantings in the Bay Boulevard median.
6. Add Fire House/Ambulance & Community Room as a potential destination on the mapping.
7. OBVTA is trying to acquire a 300’ by 100’ section of the OCUA property. County will not consider providing property until repairs to OCUA facility are complete (construction should be being soon).

Ortley Beach Business Strip:

A recommendation emerged to create a planter prototype for the Business District that could be dedicated and that the individual Business owners could be responsible for maintaining. A separate OBVTA meeting was held with business owners who voiced a desire for streetscape enhancements such as decorative street lighting and benches. The benches and planters could be sponsored by businesses that would have their names on painted or wooden or metal engraved plaques or plates. Fundraising to open up sponsorships to individuals desiring to honor the memory of loved ones or other approved messages could also help to supplement the number of benches and planters around the businesses on Route 37N and in other locations such as Bay Boulevard, where businesses expressed that they are usually overlooked because they are not on Route 35.

Questions arose from the audience about how there could be plantings installed within a number of areas, and it was explained that there is a necessary maintenance costs associated with keeping these plantings alive, especially through the hot summer months. It was discussed that many of the plantings installed by the County on Bay Boulevard had suffered stress, have had to be replaced, and generally have had a difficult time getting established, including the ornamental grasses.

The safe bicycle routes were thought of as a positive addition, but there was no consensus on the routes. Overall the ideas were well received and subsequently additional ideas were requested from the consultants regarding the design of the donation planters on Route 35 North.

Public Access to the Barnegat Bay:

The ability to walk or drive a canoe or kayak to a designed launch location was seen as very desirable by the OBVTA property owners to enhance activity and appeal of the Ortley Beach Neighborhood. Previous efforts were made by the Township to include a launching spot within Bayside Park, but was met with opposition from nearby residents. The Township is currently studying public access to the water as part of a grant-funded Municipal Public Access Plan (MPAP) and has investigated a variety of options for a launch site in Ortley Beach. Bayside Park continues to offer the best option in terms of available parking and water access, but an agreement would need to be reached among stakeholders to advance the concept.