

BOROUGH OF ALLENDALE

ALLENDALE, NEW JERSEY

October 21, 1963

TO THE VOTERS OF THE BOROUGH OF ALLENDALE

For some years now, your Borough Council and Planning Board have studied the zoning of the Borough to determine what zoning would give the optimum balance to the Borough, taking into account such factors as the predominately residential character of the Borough, the future needs of schools and other services, the tax structure, and the many other factors that enter into good zoning. Of course, this is a difficult task as so many of the factors to be considered can not be predicted with accuracy and others are solely matters of individual judgment which can be expected to vary widely from person to person.

The purpose of this letter is two-fold:

1. To explain the referendum questions on which we hope you will indicate your preference on November 5.
2. To explain, as objectively as possible, the reasons we believe the suggested changes will benefit the Borough and its residents.

The study which has taken place through the recent years has taken several forms:

1. Discussion between members of the Council, between the members of the Planning Board, and with residents.
2. Study of ordinances of other New Jersey communities, discussion of the results of these ordinances with officials and residents of these towns.
3. Discussion of our planning with a Planning Consultant and review of his report after his study of our zoning.

As a result of the above, an ordinance creating a new light industry zone was introduced last March. Some well taken opposition to this ordinance indicated a need for reconsideration which in turn led to its withdrawal. The present proposal is a result of much rethinking and involves an area much smaller in size than originally proposed, but we consider it to be an improvement over what we now have.

During this same time, we have received many requests for so-called luxury type garden apartments. While three or four of these requests were from hopeful builders, more were from our older people (some widowed, some retired) or parents of young people, newly married, in both cases hoping for lower-cost rental housing that is generally not available in Allendale.

Now the Council has put two questions on the ballot for the General Election on November 5. These are:

"Do you favor, in principle, a revision of the Zoning Ordinance to increase the industrial area at the North-east corner of the Borough, adjacent in part to Route # 17, from about 31 acres to about 79 acres with buffer zone, 7 1/2 acre minimum lots with only one building thereon and maximum height of 35 feet."

"Do you favor, in principle, a revision of the Zoning Ordinance permitting luxury-type garden apartments on an area not to exceed 14 acres with not more than twelve two-story units per acre, all of which, but one, shall be one-bedroom units, primarily intended for use by newly married people and senior citizens."

By State Statute, such questions as this must be brief; it is one of the purposes of this letter to advise you more fully what is proposed. Further, by Statute, the result of the vote is not legally binding on the Council but only serves to indicate to the Council, as well as to the Planning Board, the general desires of you, the voters. Should the Council take any action subsequent to the election which you feel to be contrary to the good of the Borough as a whole, such action is always subject to a binding referendum by petition of a suitable number of residents.

The changes in the ordinance as proposed on light industry might best be set forth in table form as below: It should be stated that only the specific area on Rt. 17 and Boroline Road is affected. Regulations and areas otherwise zoned for "D zone - Light Industry" are not affected by the changes shown below.

<u>Feature</u>	<u>Existing "D Zone"</u>	<u>Proposed "E Zone"</u>
Block	53	53
Lots	277-A, Part of 277 260	237, 250, 250-A, 250-B, 250-C, 260, 277, 277-A.
Total area - Acres	31	79
Minimum lot size - Acres	2	7 1/2
Front yard - feet	50	100
Side yard - feet	40	50
Rear yard - feet	50	100
Maximum permitted occupancy		
Buildings %	35	30
Buildings and paving %	90	80
Buffer zone	none	100 ft. with minimum 6' high, 3' apart hemlock hedge.

<u>Feature</u>	<u>Existing "D zone"</u>	<u>Proposed "E Zone"</u>
Accessory buildings - number per lot	no limit	2 maximum
Building height - maximum ft. stories	40 2 1/2	35 2 1/2
Uses permitted	Light manufactur- ing, processing, assembly operations	same *
Maximum persons per acre	50	50
Hours of delivery	7 A.M. to 8 P.M. Mon. thru Sat. except to Rt. 17	same
Maximum water use - gallons per day	3,000	3,000
Landscaping of whole area	required	required
Requirements on maximum noise levels, noxious gas discharge and liquid waste discharge	included	included

* Uses previously permitted which are proposed to be excluded are:
 Food and associated processing
 Manufacture of cosmetics

The intent of the proposed change is to achieve a better balanced community. There is no doubt that in some respects an entirely residential town would be ideal; however, the generally accepted concept of good planning strives for a balance between all factors, and it is the impression that, to at least a moderate number of residents, the annual tax bill is of some importance.

It is obvious, in our growing Borough, that the cost of community services will be on a continuing rise every year. Even if our growth stopped immediately there would be increased annual budgetary costs due to the normal upward trend in cost of services and materials. With a static base of ratables, this can only result in a continual upward spiralling of the tax rate. It is our belief that a moderate increase in the best available area suitable for light industry would result in a moderate gain in ratables. Such gain in ratables should not of course be eaten away by increased costs attributable to such industrial rezoning. We believe our findings of fact conservatively show a net gain.

It is not possible to predict with mathematical precision the ultimate effect of any zoning. Below are listed some points which your decision should, at least in part, take into account.

The first consideration to bear on the subject is relative tax income. Basis for the numbers or thoughts below is the entire 79 acres under discussion. If this area were zoned for AAA residential use, it could be developed into about 70 lots. These would be worth (including land) about \$35,000.00 each, assessed at about 20% and taxed at a rate of, say \$13.20 per \$100.00

Tax revenue = 70 x \$35,000 x 20% x .1320 = \$64,800.00 per year.
not taking into account Veteran's and Senior Citizen's exemptions
or the current assessed value.

If the area were zoned for industry, land value would be about
\$10,000.00 an acre. Assuming roads would take 4 acres (a high number)
there would be 75 acres worth \$10,000.00 per acre or a land value of
\$750,000.00. Buildings could occupy 30% of the land. If they did
cover 25%, their full value (at \$10/sq. ft.) would be:

75 acres x 43,560 sq. ft./acre x 25% x \$10/sq. ft. = \$8,150,000.00

Total value then would be \$8,150,000.00

750,000.00

\$8,900,000.00

Total revenue = \$8,900,000 x 20% x 13.20/100 = \$235,000.00

Therefore, the difference in annual tax revenue is about \$235,000 -
\$65,000 = \$170,000/year.

Of course, any development of any area affects costs of the
various services provided by the Borough. All sorts of numbers can
be cited on these services and the effect of light industry vs.
residential, but it is generally acknowledged that it is virtually
impossible to make an accurate allocation of these. Therefore, we
present some thoughts for your consideration:

1. Police. The duty of our police is primarily to protect
people. An area developed residentially certainly
has more miles of road to be patrolled. On the
other hand, a light industry area would probably
require traffic direction morning and afternoon
when workers are going to and from work. Assuming
two points of traffic control, and 1 1/2 hours in
the morning and the same in the afternoon, and
payment of \$2.00/hr., the cost would be (1 1/2 +
1 1/2) hrs/day x 5 days/wk. x 52 wks/yr x \$2.00/hr =
\$1,560/yr. With cost of uniforms, this would be
under \$2,000/yr.
2. Fire. There is little doubt that eventually we will need
a fourth fire truck, regardless of zoning changes.
However, Allendale is part of a mutual aid group
in which additional equipment is available in case
of emergency. Limitations on building height and
other features on fire prevention minimize need for
added men or equipment. Actually our public safety
Departments are more concerned over protection for
the new regional high school (both Police and Fire
Departments) than for the proposed light industry
use.
3. Traffic. There is no doubt traffic will increase. However,
persons occupied in the proposed area will go, not
only through Allendale, but also north and south
on Route 17. Further, the added traffic would pri-
marily come only for a short period twice a day.

4. Road cost. While the streets in the light industry area are subject to heavier traffic than those in residential zone, there are fewer feet of roads to be maintained. Other roads in town which would be subjected to increased traffic are maintained by the County.
5. Street lighting. Lower in light industry use because of less roadway.
6. Sewers and water. Both of these items are, or will be, self supporting utilities. The use of water is limited by ordinance to an amount which will have a minor effect on our water situation. Fire protection has never been jeopardized by a water shortage as the Borough has ties with the water systems of Ramsey and Waldwick which can be used in event of emergency. Actually, provisions of the proposed ordinance will reduce the number of potential light industry water users in the area under question from 15 to 10 (each user is limited to the use of 3,000 gal/day under existing and proposed ordinances.)
7. Schools. Industry requires no schools. Residential use would add, say, 70 homes with an average of at least one school child each. Cost per child in school is over \$500. The annual cost would then be 70 homes x 1 child/home x \$500/child = \$35,000/yr. Further, there is a limit to the number of children that can be handled in existing facilities. Need for another school would greatly increase this cost.

While it is possible that property values can be depreciated by industrial zoning (although this is certainly not inevitable), conversely, values of homes can definitely be reduced by increases in taxes.

To summarize the foregoing, we have tabulated the same factors for easier comparison and have also shown the resulting effects on the tax rate. Again it is emphasized that these are based on fixed assumptions, with industry figures deliberately on the conservative side, and any variations would probably favor the light industry result.

<u>SOURCE OF REVENUE</u>	<u>AAA RESIDENTIAL</u>	<u>"E ZONE" LIGHT INDUSTRY</u>
Number of usable acres	xxx	75
Unit cost of land	xxx	\$10,000 per acre
Number of residences	70	xxx

<u>SOURCE OF REVENUE</u>	<u>AAA RESIDENTIAL</u>	<u>"E ZONE" LIGHT INDUSTRY</u>
Available industrial buildings (@ 25% of area)	xxx	815,000 sq. ft.
Average unit cost	\$35,000	\$10 sq. ft.
		\$750,000 land <u>8,150,000 buildings</u>
Total full values	<u>\$2,450,000</u>	<u>\$8,900,000</u>
Additional ratables @ 20%	\$ 490,000	\$1,780,000
Less: current assessed value of 79 acres	<u>80,000</u> 410,000	<u>80,000</u> 1,700,000
Less: estimated veterans and senior citizens exemptions (Borough average \$220/home)	<u>15,000</u> 395,000	<u>xxx</u> 1,700,000
Current year (1963) taxable ratables	<u>6,086,000</u>	<u>6,086,000</u>
Assumed taxable ratables	<u>\$6,481,000</u>	<u>\$7,786,000</u>
Current taxes levied (1963)	\$ 816,000	\$ 816,000
<u>ADDITIONAL COSTS</u>		
1. Police (traffic control)	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
2. Fire Protection	negligible in either case	
3. Streets and roads (maintenance)	2,800	1,400
4. Sewers and water	not part of tax base (paid by users)	
5. Street lighting	600	300
6. Schools (assumed no new facilities required)	<u>35,000</u>	<u>xxx</u>
	<u>\$ 40,400</u>	<u>\$ 3,700</u>
Assumed taxes to be levied	<u>\$ 856,400</u>	<u>\$ 819,700</u>
Assumed tax rate	<u>\$13.21</u>	<u>\$10.53</u>

Based on the present (1963) assessment ratio of 20%, a \$10.53 tax rate (based upon the current level of costs) is equivalent to \$2.11 per \$100.00 of true value of taxable property, which would rank well below the present average of the 70 municipalities in Bergen County. However, it must be borne in mind that a substantially reduced tax rate will not necessarily follow the rezoning. As mentioned previously, the costs of operating our Borough departments, the schools, and our share of County taxes are no doubt going to continue to trend upward with present economic conditions as they are. We do believe that the hoped for increase in our tax ratable base will at least prevent any upward surge of the individual homeowners' taxes.

In addition, the industrial ratables shown include land and empty buildings only, and do not include certain land improvements, and more important, any costly machinery, equipment and inventories which are all subject to taxation. A very conservative estimate of such business personal property could approximate at least \$2,000,000. at full value, which would provide \$400,000. of additional ratables at no additional cost to the Borough.

On apartments, the currently proposed zoning would include these features:

1. 12 units per acre of which only one can be two-bedroom, with the balance being one-bedroom apartments.
2. Maximum coverage of land by apartments 20%.
3. 1 enclosed garage and 1/2 outdoor parking space per unit.
4. Maximum height 2 1/2 stories with no basement apartments.
5. Entire area to be landscaped.
6. All driveways to be 24 feet wide with curbs and sidewalks and no parking on the driveways.
7. All deliveries to be made to rear.
8. Enclosed area to be provided for trash and garbage.
9. Sewage disposal system to be subject to approval by Board of Health.
10. All units to be fully air conditioned.
11. Fenced recreation area with swings, slides, etc. to be provided.

The intent of the Council on this matter is to provide housing for those persons without school-age children who want to live in Allendale but are unable to because of finances or the inability because of age to properly maintain a home. It is believed this can be accomplished by the regulations proposed. This belief is founded on the experience of other municipalities in New Jersey.

The areas (only one will finally be selected) under consideration for this use are:

1. West Crescent Ave. across from Myrtle Ave.
2. Franklin Turnpike, east side, north of Cottage Place.
3. W. Orchard St. between Memorial Dr. and the R.R. Tracks.

It is hoped by your Mayor and Council that you will cast your vote on the above subjects on November 5. It is important that you give serious consideration to both, weighing the factors as listed above and evaluating what you hear and read. We also ask that your vote be in accord with the intent of the questions in that they ask your expression of agreement with the proposals "in principle". The results of the election will be interpreted by the Council and Planning Board by taking into account the number of voters showing interest and the relative "Yes" and "No" votes. If the vote is in the affirmative the Council and Planning Board will then discuss the questions to resolve differences. Public expression will be welcome in conjunction with this discussion. Also, there are required public hearings which would be held. For example, the main difference of opinion the light industry zone is 60 vs. 79 acres with the Planning Board preferring the former.

We would urge you not to vote against the proposal only because it states 79 acres if you would prefer 60. You should vote "Yes" and then express at public meetings your preference for the smaller area. The same would apply to other specific features. We are asking that you vote for or against the principle of the proposed rezoning.

We would like to thank the many people who have helped by their suggestions and constructive questions on this matter.

Yours truly,

Councilman W. James Hall
Councilman Norman S. Lane
Councilman Raymond G. Larkin
Councilman John Morton
Councilman Robert J. Osborne

Robert I. Newman,
Mayor