



20 IMPORTANT REASONS WHY THE FORMER DURAND TRACT IS ESSENTIAL TO MILLVILLE'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Summarized from a Report prepared by the
Millville Urban Economic Redevelopment Corporation and
Triad Associates

1. No matter what the measure, the City of Millville is one of the most economically distressed municipalities in the State. The NJ DCA's 1996 Municipal Distress Index placed Millville as New Jersey's 33rd most distressed municipality. In a 2008 report intended to update that Index for all 566 municipalities statewide, the New Jersey Pinelands Commission placed Millville as the 19th most distressed of those communities. Hence, viable parcels of land suited for economic development, such as the former Durand property, are essential to the City's ability to secure needed growth and expand job opportunity.
2. The former 80 acre Durand property is one of the few industrially developable locations in the region that has public utilities, appropriate zoning, and rail access in place. Rail access is a particularly important asset not only for current development opportunity, but also to ensure the ongoing viability of the County's and City's rail freight network.
3. The former Durand property is located in the South Millville/Lascarides Industrial Park. Clearly, it was the intent of the City that this property be retained for industrial use – a goal that was shared through local “cross-acceptance” of the New Jersey State Plan. Both the 2001 Plan and the negotiated 2007 version of the State Plan Map showed the site as part of Planning Area 2 – the “Suburban” Planning Area.
4. Millville's 2012 median household income is only 69% that of New Jersey's and lower than that of Cumberland County, which is typically identified as one of the State's most economically distressed counties. The City needs all of its viable industrial land in order to grow its job base and enhance household income levels.
5. 17.1% of individuals in Millville live below the poverty line – a rate almost twice that of New Jersey according to 2008-2012 estimates from “Quick Facts” at the U.S. Bureau of the Census. Again, this suggests that all levels and agencies of government should place a high priority on job development and economic growth in Millville.
6. Millville's employment base is heavily reliant on manufacturing. According to 2012 figures obtained from ESRI, 21.1% of all the jobs in the City are in manufacturing – a rate almost two and a half times that of the State. Manufacturing employment locally and nationally is just starting to recover from the recession and the “return” of the Durand property will provide the City with a needed and viable industrial property to promote and market.
7. The former Durand property is obviously viable as a significant industrial development site, since there has been recent interest expressed in the site. In fact, the City was approached

by a large, manufacturing firm interested in building on the property just prior to the site's acquisition by NJ DEP.

8. The property's relatively easy access and proximity to Route 55 is another asset of the site's location. Since its completion in 1989, access to Route 55 has been one of the leading factors in commercial/industrial location and development in the City and County.
9. Millville's income and poverty statistics are substantially lower than the State's, meaning that post-recessionary expansion locally has not kept pace with the rest of New Jersey. This is despite some solid investments in downtown redevelopment and commercial growth. Clearly, the economy in much of southern New Jersey remains in recession – another reason why good, viable land for commercial and industrial development is so critical to the City and region.
10. Educational attainment and job readiness in Millville also lags well behind the State. Only 14% of Millville working age residents have a college degree or better. This is just a fraction of the State figure of 35%. Enhancing the economy and providing job opportunities for individuals and families also enhances opportunities for improving job skills and education.
11. Millville has a higher percentage of its workforce employed in manufacturing – one of the cornerstones of the local economy. Promoting manufacturing in the City builds on the historical strength of the this economic sector, making the former Durand site a key asset in this equation.
12. The City's unemployment rate averaged over 14% in 2012, a rate more than 4 percentage points higher than the national average at the height of "The Great Recession." The March 2014 unemployment rate of 10.8% is still higher than the national rate at the height of the downturn, and significantly greater than the State average at 7.2%.
13. Portions of the City were designated for inclusion in the New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zone Program and the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development's Empowerment Zone Program. These two designations are aimed clearly at communities exhibiting significant economic distress.
14. With more than 25% of its land base permanently protected or restricted, and substantially more already developed for residential and commercial purposes, the South Millville Industrial Park, (the site of the Durand property), is one of the few such locations in the City where new industrial growth can be accommodated.
15. The 2001 New Jersey State Plan and the negotiated 2007 Cross-Acceptance Map both identify the site of the former Durand property as part of State "Planning Area 2" or the "Suburban Planning Area;" a designation intended to accommodate future growth and development.
16. The focus on Industrial Clusters stemming from the most recent draft of the State Plan, also show this area of Millville with a substantial number of compatible industries and businesses. In fact, on a 2011 map, the New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development documented this area of Millville as an important transportation and logistics cluster of manufacturers – again documenting the property's importance as an industrial site.

17. City planning and zoning designates the former Durand tract as "industrial" and has always envisioned the property being developed as part of the South Millville Industrial Park.
18. Clearly, the City of Millville by anyone's measure remains a distressed New Jersey municipality. With an economy still in recession and with unemployment, median incomes, and poverty rates all far worse than State and National averages, Millville must provide for good, responsible economic growth and development. The former Durand property provides such a location.
19. In addition, as part of the most recent Cumberland County Wastewater Management Plan update (2012), Ms. Marilyn Lennon of the NJ DEP's land use management division reviewed the site in question and determined in a February 8, 2012 letter to the Durand Glass Company, that the parcel (Block 758, Lot 19) is "appropriate for identification as sewer service area within the Cumberland County Wastewater Management Plan currently under development."
20. As a viable industrial site, the property is unique. There are very few locations in the region where access to Route 55, direct rail access, public infrastructure, and industrial park status all come together, making the property a highly desirable location for development in the City and South Jersey Region.