

**Township of Springfield**  
Business Improvement District Steering Committee  
February 4, 2011

## **Strategic Plan**

**Mission Statement:** The Springfield Steering Committee is committed to improving the quality of doing business in Springfield for property owners, businesses and residents by making Springfield a self-sustaining, attractive, business destination for consumers and secure a clean, pleasant shopping/dining/professional environment.

### **Strengths**

#### Morris Avenue

- Accessibility
- Apartments/Residential
- Diversity in businesses
- Historical elements – Town founded in 1794
  - Cannonball
  - Church
  - Battle site
  - Smallest National park in the country!
  - RV Repairs bring in people from out of the area
- Downtown Direct Bus to Port Authority in NYC
- Parking
- The only Town that has sister towns in every state (Towns with the same name)

#### Route 22

- New building on Route 22
- Destination location
- Entertainment businesses (Movies, restaurants)
- 24 Hour services businesses (gas, food)
- Bus Stops

#### Mountain Ave

- Connector to Route 22/Main Artery
- Traffic
- Offices
- Veteran's Park (underutilized)

### **Weaknesses:**

#### Morris Ave

- Lack of parking signage
- Property not used to fullest potential
- Lack of maintenance/lighting in parking lots
- Speed
- State Road
- Lack of building maintenance

- Vacancies
- Out of town property owners
- Quality of tenants/businesses
- Transient apartments over downtown businesses
- Not family friendly/no areas to walk around
- Businesses
- Flood Plain behind downtown buildings
- Downtown Morris Avenue has not visually changed since the 1940's

### Route 22

- U-Turns have been closed along Route 22 by the DOT
- Most dangerous stretch of highway in the Country - Scotch Plains - Hillside
- People run across the highway – Not pedestrian friendly
- Center Island access
- No identity related to Springfield (don't know if you are in Springfield or other Town)
- Separate Parking lots. Must drive from location to location
- No traffic lights to slow traffic in Springfield area
- No sidewalks for Bus commuters
- No character to retail locations/no unit
- Speed/ difficult to read sign
- Lack of directional signs
- No code enforcement

### Mountain Ave

- County Road
- Spread out
- Residential mix
- No street parking
- Schools/Traffic – Difficult getting through
- Cut through to Route 22
- Developed
- Not walkable to “Downtown” area

### **Opportunities:**

- Connecting Morris Ave
- Create nice pedestrian walkway/park behind the buildings
- Create a new road behind the buildings
- Under utilized areas behind the buildings
- Programs to encourage reinvestment in properties
- Approach largest land owner in downtown
- Moving DPW Building
- Create Parking deck and bus terminal
- Create a gateway area
- Consistency in Street Signs
- Create identity/branding
- Draw the office workers into the Downtown

- Lower rents
- Bring in tenants for office buildings
- Traffic
- Bring in destination retail
- Existing successful businesses
- Has been some positive investment in area, Sofia's, Zuber
- Work with older landlords to help solve issues
- Work with code enforcement officers
- Businesses that provide better value

#### Mountain Ave

- Veteran's Park
- Parade Route/Town Events

The following are the specific projects that will help meet these goals to accomplish the mission.

### **I. Develop a cohesive look for the business districts**

#### **Purpose**

**To create an appearance that shows pride, investment and upkeep in the main business districts.**

- Develop a streetscape plan for Morris Ave and some areas on Mountain Ave.
  - Hire a Landscape Architect to develop a cohesive design for these areas that will also provide a visual connectivity.
  - Contract out to do the work.
- Work with the Planning Board to develop a Design Standards ordinance for Facades and Signage in the Business Zones.
- Provide Grant money to business and property owners for upgrading facades and signage.
- Seek grant monies to help defray the costs of the streetscape and façade/sign program.

### **II. Maintenance**

#### **Purpose**

**To create a clean, neat, welcoming atmosphere to consumers.**

- Hire a Maintenance Company that will keep the sidewalks and landscapes on Morris Ave and Mountain Ave
- Work with NJ Transit to provide new bus shelters that will be maintained.

### **III. Branding/Marketing**

#### **Purpose**

**To help retain existing businesses and recruit new business.**

- Make consumers aware of the Town as a shopping and dining center.
- Develop a recognizable brand for Springfield that will position the Township as a premier place to run your business

- A Public Relations/Marketing company would be hired to develop a marketing program that will help increase business and interest in renting space in the Township.
- Survey local consumers as to “Where they go to shop” and “Reasons why they shop there” to address what needs to be done in Springfield to make the Town attractive to shoppers.
- Create a Municipal resident interactive program to keep people informed in the process.
  - Information Flow
  - Feedback Platform

#### **IV. Create a Business Friendly Atmosphere**

##### **Purpose**

**To streamline process to attract new businesses and encourage existing businesses to reinvest.**

- Review present ordinances to see what needs to be brought up to date
- Work with Planning/Zoning Boards/Building Department to see what needs to be done to streamline the process without compromising adherence to codes.
- Develop best practices from other towns to improve process for Township and property owners/businesses.

#### **V. Investment/Reinvestment**

##### **Purpose**

**To create an atmosphere for investment and reinvestment towards a better functioning downtown.**

- Work with Township to expedite studies needed for DEP Waiver of Restrictions that does prohibits investment.
- Work with property owners and developers to reinvest in their properties that are substandard for today’s retailer.
- Hire Consultants/work with planning dept. in County to do parking studies to provide more and easily accessible parking areas.

##### **One-Five Year Plan**

- Forge positive relationships with Village officials, Village politicians, local newspapers, non-profits, cultural establishments
- Begin to create a business friendly atmosphere
  - Review existing codes
  - Work with Planning & Zoning Boards, Building Department
- Develop a branding/marketing plan
- Develop and implement a maintenance plan
- Develop and implement Design Criteria for the three business areas of town.
- Create incentives for investment into façade improvements
- Do Parking Study
- Develop a Way Finding Sign System

- Develop a Retail Analysis Study
- Facilitate Reinvestment of Morris Ave. (Downtown Area)

### Recommendations for Plan Implementation

- **Implement the Special Improvement District**
  - **Amend present ordinance**
  - **Appoint a Board of Directors**
  - **Develop a budget/assessment rates**
  - **Incorporate/Develop By-Laws**
  - **Hire a District Manager**

### Steering Committee Roster

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Address</b>
Robert	Beller		Resident/Chamber	100 Wilson Road #79
Billy	Briggs	Springfield Truck Center Vinmarphil Holding Corporation	Property Owner	311 Morris Avenue 417 Tenth Ave/Manchester
Vincent	Conte		Property Owner	
Jerry	Fernandez	Township of Springfield	Government, Resident	100 Mountain Avenue
David	Gardner	Larken Associates	Property Owner	901 Mountain Avenue
Kenneth	Gruskin	Gruskin Group McLynn's Casual Food & Drink	Business Owner	294 Morris Avenue
Stephen	Keller		Business	250 Morris Avenue
Victor	Kelly	Larken Associates	Property Owner	
Roger	Kosempel	JMK BMW	Business	391-399 Route 22 East
Beth	Lippman	Downtown Resources, Inc.	Government	
Daniel	Murphy	Investors Savings Bank	Business Business, Property	173 Mountain Avenue
Mike	Scalera	State Farm Insurance	Owner	401 Morris Avenue
David	Scheck		Resident	
Robert	Schoenerman	JMK BMW	General Mgr	391-399 Route 22 East
Scott	Seidel	Chamber of Commerce	Business, Resident	1 Cornell Parkway
Dana	Zuber	Dr. Zuber	Property Owner	251 Morris Avenue 417 Tenth Ave/Manchester
Paola	Conte		Property Owner	