

County's biggest retail projects

Following are the 15 largest retail developments proposed in Somerset County, according to the county Planning Board. Information is from county municipal officials.

1. Blue Star Shopping Center, Watchung

Federal Realty and Trust of Bethesda, Md., owner of the 369,455-square-foot shopping center on Route 22, won approval in August 1996 from the Watchung Planning Board to expand by 163,000 square feet. County officials earlier this year approved traffic and drainage upgrades.

2. Watchung Square, Watchung

Fidelity Land Management of Chatham received preliminary approval in November from the Watchung Planning Board to build a regional shopping complex of 750,000 square feet. The Somerset County Planning Board has yet to approve drainage and traffic plans for the site. Developers plan to build the complex on a 75-acre parcel on Route 22 at the former site of Lockheed, the defense contractor. Two residents and the Borough of North Plainfield have filed a lawsuit to block construction of the shopping mall; construction depends on the outcome of the lawsuit.

3. Tea Street shopping center, Bound Brook

Construction has begun on a 257,000-square-foot shopping center on the 46-acre site on Tea Street. Advanced Properties of Bedminster, the developer, plans to include a Shop-Rite, a Burger King and several smaller shops.

4. American Home Products, Bridgewater

The Bridgewater Township Council rezoned the former American Cyanamid site in the Finnerne section, paving the way for Krame Development Co. of Paramus to build up to 700,000 square feet of retail at the site. Krame filed plans with the county Planning Board for Bridgewater Promenade, which will include 12 buildings and 3,600 parking spaces. The Somerset County freeholders are finalizing a contract with would-be minor-league baseball team owner Steven Kalafer to build a \$14.5 million ballpark nearby on the same tract. They could vote on the contract this month. Township and county officials are negotiating to resolve concerns about traffic and emergency services for the proposed stadium.

5. Village Center, Bridgewater

The Bridgewater Planning Board first received a development application in 1993 from GAF, a Wayne company that manufactures roofing shingles and building equipment. The application is pending. Plans call for converting the 45-acre tract north of Route 22 into a mixed-use development, with 200,000 square feet of retail space.

Promenade plans

Details of the plans for the Bridgewater Promenade:

- Area covered: 146.8 acres
- Retail space: About 625,000 square feet, about two-thirds the size of the Bridgewater Commons
- Office/hotel space: About 75,000 square feet
- Plan approval target: mid-November
- Completion target: summer 1999
- Average number of trips to the complex: weekday, 23,622; Saturday: 29,087
- How the cars would get there: via Interstate 287, 43 percent; Main Street from the west, 19 percent; Route 22 from the east, 15 percent; Route 28 from the west, 13 percent; other, 10 percent
- Other details: The plans include preserving the historic Van Horne house and the three acres it sits on.

Source: Plans filed Friday with Somerset County and Bridgewater by Krame Development.

6. Somerville Landfill

The state Department of Environmental Protection has appointed a coordinator to fast-track state permits required to build a 780,000-square-foot shopping center. The developer, Rosenshein Associates of New Rochelle, N.Y., plans a 20-screen movie theater, a 200,000-square-foot "big box" discount store and other such outlets as restaurants, a super bookstore and apparel stores.

7. RCA Harris Mall, Bridgewater
Rezoning discussions are continuing between township officials and the Harris Corp. on plans to build a 550,000-square-foot shopping complex, which would include supermarkets, banks, restaurants, theaters and offices at the former RCA site on Route 202.

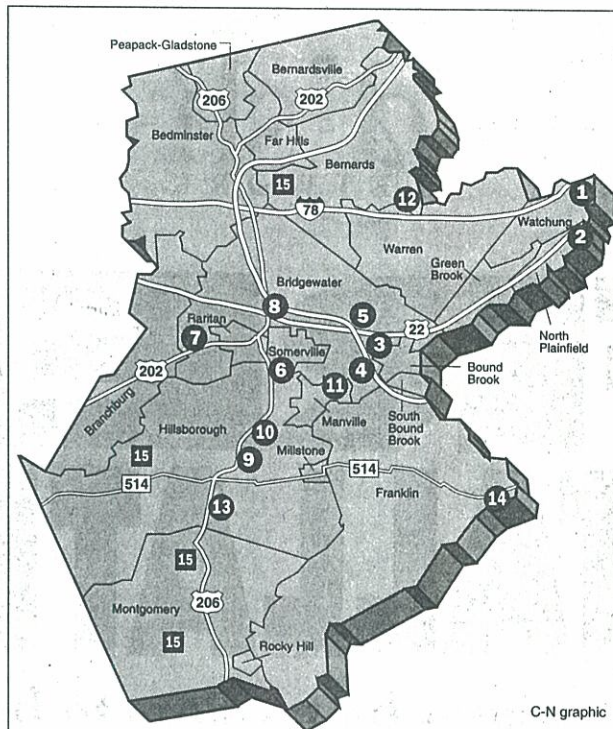
8. Bridgewater Commons

The Hahn Co. and Prudential Realty Corp. plan to nearly double the size of the mall by expanding 750,000 square feet by 2005. The plans could include two anchor stores, one large specialty store and additional parking. Formal plans could be filed sometime this year.

9. Krame, Hillsborough

Krame Development has applied to have a 95-acre site rezoned from residential to retail. The request is before the Township Committee, which established a rezoning subcommittee to evaluate the issue. A report and recommendation from that committee is expected next month. Conceptual plans call for construction of a 300,000-square-foot shopping center and realignment of Falcon Road.

10. Gateway Center, Hillsborough
Gateway at Sunnymead is slated to include 800 homes for senior citizens



C-N graphic

and possibly up to 250,000 square feet of retail space on a 40-acre parcel. The retail plans are on hold.

11. Adesa, Manville

Adesa Corp. plans to incorporate 200,000 square feet of retail space into the auto-auction complex, which is under construction at the former Johns-Manville plant. National Realty, the developer, plans to go before municipal officials this month to discuss the project. Wal-Mart is rumored to be one of the anchors being courted.

12. Dewey Meadows farm, Bernards

Township officials established a special advisory committee of Planning Board members, residents, developers and county representatives to consider changing the site's zoning from single-family residential to retail. The committee will consider a neighborhood-style retail concept. Owners of the farm have discussed a 96,000-square-foot shopping center and supermarket for the site.

13. Starbare, Hillsborough

Starbare Associates of Roseland initially applied to the Board of Adjustment to build stores and an ice-hockey rink. Those plans are on hold. Starbare plans to go before the Planning Board with a second plan for development, a theater and two restaurants. That proposal conforms with township zoning.

14. Renaissance 2000

Plans to redevelop Franklin and New Brunswick call for bringing 450,000 square feet of retail space to the communities. The project is moving ahead; construction could begin in two years.

15. Other neighborhood centers

Town centers are being discussed by

planning officials in Bernards and Montgomery for possible inclusion in local master plans. Hillsborough officials are considering a similar plan.