

Somerset County Police Consolidation Plan  
Precinct One Facilities Summary Report  
Chief Bobowicz

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the facilities and physical plant needs of Precinct One of the Somerset County Police Consolidation Plan which includes the northernmost municipalities of Bedminster, Bernards Township, Bernardsville, Far Hills and Peapack-Gladstone. Each of these municipalities operates their own respective municipal police departments with individual police headquarters. Of the five police departments, only Bernards Township has a stand-alone structure dedicated for use as a police headquarters. Bedminster Township Police occupy a stand-alone building purpose built for police work however; it is also shared with their Municipal Court. The remaining municipalities of Bernardsville, Far Hills and Peapack-Gladstone have their police headquarters located within their respective main municipal buildings. The latter three municipalities basically assign or share space within non-police-purpose buildings such as old schools (Far Hills and P-G) and a converted historic mill (Bernardsville).

The Facilities Committee met on three occasions in the Fall of 2011 to discuss projected space requirements for all five precincts. One of the primary concepts under review for each of the five precincts was whether existing police and/or municipal facilities were available for re-use by the SC Consolidated Police Force. Or, whether there was a demonstrated need to construct a new purpose-built facility(s). For the purpose of this report, only Precinct One will be discussed. On October 26<sup>th</sup>, the five previously listed police headquarters were evaluated by the team members in attendance. As the Bernards Township governing body decided against the use of its police headquarters in this consolidation plan, that structure was immediately discounted from consideration. With four remaining police headquarters, the team decided that Bernardsville and Far Hills would be removed from further consideration due to their size, design, condition and accessibility. The police headquarters of Bedminster Township and Peapack-Gladstone were identified as potentially viable options in need of further review. This review would include a site visit by Chief Brian Bobowicz that included interviews with each municipality's Chief of Police and Township/Borough Administrator. Additionally, digital pictures of the buildings, parking and access would be produced. Finally, it was pre-determined that Bedminster would potentially house the Patrol function while Peapack-Gladstone would house the Traffic and Detective functions of Precinct One.

The site visits were conducted on November 4<sup>th</sup> with the concepts of splitting the three major precinct functions of Patrol, Traffic Safety and

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Detective/Investigative. While it is understood that the effectiveness of criminal intelligence and management/supervision may be negatively impacted by the separation of these functions within the precinct, the concept was explored for the purpose of cost-savings and possible efficiency. Another possible positive side effect of splitting the functions would be the increase in general police presence within the geographic area of the precinct as Officers would be spread out within based on functional assignment. Procedural and operational safeguards would need to be addressed to ensure information/intelligence sharing takes place as well as supervisory accountability is maintained.

Upon completion of the site visits, it is the opinion of the assessor that neither facility and/or campus are appropriate for the needs of Precinct One's staffing. Starting from an exterior perspective, neither location has sufficient parking currently or conceivably available to meet the needs of the fleet, employee vehicles and visitors. Both locations currently experience congested parking issues as municipal recreation fields are located adjacent to the police facilities. Also, both locations share their parking and general campus area with their other municipal services, administration, DPW, etc. This is a severe impediment to the use of either facility and unless it is realistically addressed, neither location can be considered. The Bedminster location is suitable for centralized response within the precinct while the P-G location is not as it is located close to the northern border with Morris County.

Moving inside, the P-G facility is extremely small and functionally limiting. A simple redesign of the P-G interior office space would yield possibly 4-5 desk positions with maybe two interview rooms. This alone would not lend itself to a productive work space for the planned Detectives no less the additional Traffic Safety Officers that would also be housed at the same location. It is the opinion of the assessor that the P-G Police Headquarters location be removed from consideration in this consolidation plan. Next, moving inside to the Bedminster Police Headquarters, one will find a relatively modern and spacious physical environment for the current use of its less than 20 employees. As stated previously, the Bedminster Municipal Court is housed in the lower level of the police building taking up approximately 25% of the overall building. If this building was to be converted for use as a Precinct One station, the Municipal Court offices would have to be vacated and converted to full police use. Additionally, it was the opinion of those interviewed, this assessor and those in attendance at the November 8<sup>th</sup> Facilities Committee review session, that a third floor would have to be added to accommodate the additional personnel over and above the current 20 Bedminster PD employees. Moreover, the significant parking concerns coupled with the major construction/renovation costs associated with adding

a third floor to Bedminster Police Headquarters directs this assessor to conclude that this too is not a viable option from both an effectiveness and efficiency review.

A final area of consideration in the process of determining whether or not to use any existing police facilities in any of the five precincts that remains unanswered is the assumption of remaining/outstanding construction bond costs. This question remains open for Precinct One but as evidenced by the possible use of the Bridgewater PD Headquarters that was recently constructed at a cost of \$20 million (PD HQ & Town Hall), this concept will mostly likely be of great concern to the municipal taxpayers left holding the tax bill for a building converted to Somerset County use. The Facilities Committee will need to factor these costs into the overall scope of its final report.

The preceding site visit review comprehensively answered the question for Precinct One of whether or not existing police headquarters facilities can and/or should be re-used to the negative. None of the available police facilities in the Somerset Hills area are sufficient in location, parking and/or physical plant space to be re-used as a police facility in the proposed SC Police Consolidation Plan. This determination necessitates that a properly designed structure be acquired for use as the primary Precinct One Station. As discussed in prior Facilities Committee meetings, research into a long-term lease of a commercial office building-style property located directly off Interstate 78 at Exit 33 or Interstate 287 at Exit 26 in the Bernards Township/Warren Township area is prudent. A vacant building could be renovated to meet the needs of the entire precinct and house all operations in one location with adequate parking and accessibility for a centralized response. Additionally, an underutilized local ratable can be secured for optimal use and return to the local economy. Expanded cost analysis research into the current real estate market, availability, lease rates and renovation costs is warranted for Precinct One's police station.

The only remaining query left from the October 26<sup>th</sup> planning meeting concerns vehicle maintenance facilities and personnel. More specifically, the Facilities Committee recognized the need to provide for the outfitting and maintenance of the large fleet of patrol cars, unmarked cars and support/specialty vehicles that will be used by the Somerset County Consolidated Police Force. The logistics of vehicle maintenance to include scheduling, shuttling/delivery and maintenance down-time necessitated the selection of regional garages/service bays throughout the county. This assessor was tasked with reviewing the available resources and facilities in the Somerset Hills area. The conclusion is that there are not any viable municipal services, property and/or interest in providing for the maintenance

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of this fleet of vehicles. However, as each Precinct does not necessarily need its own maintenance garage, Precinct One could shuttle its vehicles to a location in the northern portion of Precinct Two when/if one can be identified. This component of the consolidation plan and the importance to delivery of police services needs to be a priority for the final cumulative report of the Facilities Committee.

## Somerset County Police Consolidation Plan

### *Facilities Summary Report - Precinct Two*

By Chief Russell W. Leffert

#### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the facility needs of Precinct Two of the Somerset County Police Consolidation Plan. For identification purposes, Precinct Two includes the Boroughs of North Plainfield and Watchung, and the Townships of Greenbrook and Warren.

#### Goals

Currently, the 4 municipalities operate their own Municipal Police Forces; each with its own police facility. The goal of our committee was to make the most logical, feasible, and cost effective consolidation of the facilities in which to house Precinct Two. Of the four, only Greenbrook has a standalone police building. For the purposes of this report, "*standalone*" shall mean a building which houses only operations directly related to the police function. The other three remaining police buildings contain at a minimum, their respective Municipal Court within their building.

In early discussions amongst our group, it was discussed that attempts would be made to complete the consolidation of Precinct Two based on the following order of efficiency:

1. House the entire precinct (patrol, detective, traffic, specialty and support staff) in one existing facility
2. House the entire precinct in one existing facility with modifications and/or additions.

If neither of the above two directions were possible, the following courses would be investigated depending on their level of cost effectiveness both to the consolidation program and the individual municipality.

1. Split the precinct functions up amongst one or more existing facilities (i.e. patrol in one facility and detective, traffic, specialty and support in another); or
2. House the entire precinct in existing suitable commercial space through a long term lease agreement; or
3. House the entire precinct in existing suitable commercial space through purchase; or
4. House the entire precinct in new space constructed solely for the project.

### Basic Needs

The first and most critical need was to examine the existing facilities to determine which one, if any, had the characteristics necessary to be considered for a primary location. After comparing several relevant factors such as location within the precinct, accessibility during storm/flood conditions, age of construction, parking and the potential for renovation/addition, the **Watchung Police Department building was chosen as the Primary Location.**

Although not the largest facility of the four, the Watchung facility was chosen as much for the potential problems that it does not have, as much as the qualities that it does possess. By example:

1. Although none of the current facilities are truly "centrally located" in the proposed precinct, the Watchung facility is more central than the others while still having good and quick access to the Route 22 corridor which 3 of the 4 precincts patrol.
2. During severe storm/flood conditions, the Greenbrook facility can at best have poor access, and at worst, be inaccessible. If for no other reason, the committee felt that this situation should preclude Greenbrook's facility from being considered as the primary precinct location.
3. Watchung's headquarters was newly constructed as a dedicated police facility in 1999. Warren and North Plainfield's facilities,

although significantly renovated, were constructed in 1920 and 1930 respectively.

4. Parking was an issue that became more critical the further it was discussed in committee. While Watchung currently has the most available parking, of more significance was that North Plainfield and Warren are currently at maximum capacity or even below their current parking needs with no possibility of expansion.

With Watchung chosen as the primary location, we began to evaluate the structure sequentially through the list of goals enumerated above. The first and foremost challenge was trying to house the total work force (sworn & civilian) of four similarly sized departments, into a single facility which currently houses only 40 persons. This problem was not unique to the Watchung facility and would have been the first hurdle to overcome when using any of the facilities in their current configuration. The advantage however, of the Watchung location is the potential for reconfiguring, renovating, and adding additional space to the current facility in efforts to house the entire precinct.

### Calculations

The precinct size and rank structure presented to our committee was 133 Sworn Personnel and 8 Civilians for a total work force of 141. Committee calculations indicate that the physical plant needed to house Precinct Two would be approximately 26,500 square feet. The current Watchung facility is 9000 square feet. Being clear that the new precinct's workforce would need additional space, ways to increase the size of the facility were examined. Although previously stated that the Watchung facility has the potential for additional space being added, the location of the facility on the property poses significant limitations. The Western and Southern portions of the property are surrounded by 300' sheer bedrock cliffs. This geographical situation means that any additions to the building would be limited to the existing footprint of the current structure. With these limitations in mind, close examination of Watchung facility show that the Northern end of the complex is confined to one story. This is the portion of the building which currently houses their Municipal Court. The court area is approximately 1600 square feet.

Converting the building to a standalone police building by relocating the Municipal Court would immediately release that footage. As the remainder of the facility is a 2 story building, adding a second floor to the existing footprint would add an additional 1600 square feet and if Watchung's Municipal Code does not preclude such building, a third floor may be an option. Unfortunately, using the two story model would yield a building of approximately 12,200 square feet. Even the 3 story model only brings the facilities' total square footage up to a potential use of 13,800 square feet or just over half the required space calculated by this committee.

### Splitting the Precinct Locations

While the committee agrees that splitting up the precinct is not an optimal situation and falls farther down the list of our enumerated goals, we do feel that using two existing, municipally owned buildings will still be more cost effective than other options; at least for the start up phase of the Consolidation Plan. Combining the precinct under one roof could be addressed as a secondary goal after the Plan is up and running.

Using the aforementioned square footage calculations, the Precinct Two Patrol function as well as the Evidence and Records functions could be housed at the Watchung location. The remaining functions of Detectives, Traffic, School Resource Officers, Facilities, Equipment and Vehicles, would be housed at the determined secondary location.

The committee agreed upon Greenbrook and Warren as potential secondary or additional locations. While both locations do have their pros and cons, the **Warren Township Police Department Building will be discussed here as the additional location.** In this instance, the Warren facility was chosen over the Greenbrook location due more to secondary influences rather than a strict building vs. building examination. Had the criteria been merely building characteristics, Greenbrook's facility would have likely been chosen as it is a newer standalone building.

During committee discussions, a topic that received much consideration was that of vehicle parking, vehicle maintenance, and overall motor pool issues for the precincts. While these topics were not specifically enumerated in "Host Facilities", they do have a

significant effect on our facilities and as such are hard NOT to address. During our onsite inspections and in questions posed to the individual departments assigned us, municipalities were asked several questions regarding their fleet of vehicles. Examples of the questions are:

1. Fleet size?
2. How is the fleet maintained? (onsite DPW, off site DPW, dealer, other contractor)
3. If fleet is maintained by the municipality, would they be interested in doing repairs for the County (precinct) on a pay for service basis?

Warren Township was the only municipality within the Precinct Two model which expressed an interest in performing fleet maintenance and repairs on a pay for service basis. Calculation of the space required to house the secondary functions (Detectives, Traffic, School Resource Officers, Facilities, Equipment and Vehicles) show them to be a good fit for the Warren facility.

Examining this information in total demonstrates that it makes sense to use Warren as the additional location thus keeping the Motor Pool function and the enumerated secondary location functions within the same municipal complex.

#### Additional Considerations/Concerns

One significant goal of the Consolidation Plan is the savings of taxpayer dollars through limiting the number of facilities in use within the precincts. That being said, earlier in this report, the displacement of the Municipal Court from the Watchung facility became necessary to facilitate keeping the Patrol Function in one location. This situation opened the door for considerations on where to house the court or courts precinct wide. During committee discussions on the court situation, most members felt that one centralized court location within each precinct would be the most prudent way to address this situation.

In Precinct Two, the centralized court may be achieved by using the current Greenbrook Municipal Court which seats approximately 150 persons and has a significant amount of parking to accommodate same. Staggered day and night court sessions could be implemented to handle the court load of the 4 towns of the precinct.

Committee consideration was also given to another aspect of the closing of 1 or more of the police facilities currently in use. The public in all four towns have always had a police department that they could walk into 24/7 and seek the assistance of police. If the above model was followed for the consolidation of Precinct Two, both Greenbrook and North Plainfield would no longer have a physical location with a police presence. While the number of walk in persons may not be significant in the Greenbrook situation, the number of persons who walk into the lobby of the North Plainfield Police Department is substantial; upwards of 5 – 7000 persons per year. With this amount of walk in traffic, a full closure of the North Plainfield Police Headquarters is not an option. At the minimum, a satellite office using a portion of the building (or other commercial space) would need to be manned 24/7.

### Synopsis

For Precinct Two-

1. The **Watchung Police Department will be identified as the Primary Precinct Location** and through a series of remodeling and addition work, will house the entire Patrol function as well as the Evidence and Records functions.
2. The **Warren Police Department will be identified as the Secondary/Additional Precinct Location** and through renovation of existing space, will house the Detectives, Traffic, School Resource Officers, Facilities, Equipment and Vehicles. The Warren facility will also handle the Motor Pool function for the precinct managing repairs and maintenance.
3. A **portion of the North Plainfield Department (or other commercial space) will be used as a 24/7 Satellite Facility** handling walk in citizen request for service. This location may also be used for a booking and/or temporary detainment facility. The remainder of North Plainfield's facility will NOT be used.
4. The **Greenbrook Municipal Court Facility will be used as the Precinct wide Municipal Court.**
5. The Greenbrook Police Department facility will NOT be used.

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The above is a hypothetical model based on what the committee feels is the most cost effective means to house the size of the work force supplied to us from others. Political positions, desires and opinions were not considered in the process. While we feel that we have answered the Precinct Two questions posed as we know them to date, the potential for additional questions are no doubt endless.

**Somerset County Police Consolidation Plan  
Precinct Three Facilities Summary Report**  
Chief Borden

This report will encompass a summary/overview of the Bridgewater Township Police Department which will serve as the Precinct Three Headquarters. Precinct Three will provide a coverage area for Bound Brook, Branchburg, Bridgewater, Raritan and Somerville municipalities. The current Bridgewater Police Department Headquarters was chosen based on size of the structure, location to the adjacent municipalities served and newness of the facility as the building was occupied by the police department in April of 2009. The Bridgewater Police facility is part of a three building municipal complex, housing both the Township Administration/Municipal offices and the Municipal Court. The Municipal Court is a new facility and the Municipal Office building combines a new exterior with renovation to the previous interior with supplemental new additions. The Court and Administration Offices were occupied in 2010.

During the course of several meetings with our Facilities Committee in the latter part of 2011 the original Banker Report which detailed the use of a Three Precinct Model was changed to a Five Precinct Model. Concerns were conveyed by not only our committee but also by other Committees as to the positioning of the precincts relevant to response times to locations and the distance between each of the facilities. Access during peak flooding times and access during peak traffic times were analyzed. This evaluation alone eliminated several police buildings from further consideration. Another topic of debate was the size of the actual facilities and the building's ability to house a large contingent of personnel and equipment. Based on the above issues the Five Precinct Model became the optimum option.

In choosing the Bridgewater Township Police Department as the Headquarters for Precinct Three comparisons were made including total square footage, evidence storage areas, record storage space, holding cell capacity, off-site/on-site vehicle maintenance, office space, patrol and detective areas, indoor and outdoor storage and parking availability to name a few of the major questions addressed. The support of the local governing administration to house the central precinct in their Township was also of paramount concern. Based on the results of all the categories compared our police department was chosen as the Precinct Three Headquarters. The sheer size of our police department and the daily needs that were addressed in the original planning of the new police facility were determining factors as stated in the aforementioned paragraph.

**The following are size use in square feet of the Bridgewater Township Police Facility:**

○ <b>Total for Police Facility</b>	<b>20,000</b>
○ <b>Conference Training Space</b>	<b>650</b>
○ <b>Evidence Lockup</b>	<b>500</b>
○ <b>Evidence Processing</b>	<b>400</b>
○ <b>Records Storage Space</b>	<b>500</b>
○ <b>Patrol Office Space</b>	<b>145</b>
○ <b>Detective Office Space</b>	<b>1,000</b>
○ <b>Holding Cell/Area</b>	<b>800</b>
○ <b>Enclosed Office Space</b>	<b>1,600</b>
○ <b>Open Office Space</b>	<b>550</b>
○ <b>Lobby Area</b>	<b>120</b>
○ <b>Indoor Storage</b>	<b>600</b>
○ <b>Outdoor Fenced Storage</b>	<b>3,500</b>
○ <b>Processing Lab</b>	<b>340</b>
○ <b>Dispatch</b>	<b>570</b>
○ <b>Locker Rooms-Women/Men</b>	<b>380/1180</b>
○ <b>Interview Rooms</b>	<b>430</b>
○ <b>Gym</b>	<b>460</b>

Though our facility meets the basic needs/criteria of an independent police precinct, additional space would be required to house the larger specialized bureaus (i.e. Detective, Traffic Bureaus) that would service the Precinct Three district. Our committee decided to investigate satellite precincts in our coverage area. Renovations/additions appear to be a requirement regardless of the selection of satellite precincts due to several of the stated reasons in this report and the increased allocation of personnel to each precinct. These factors will be discussed in greater detail in other sub-committee reports. The availability of these satellite locations would assist in minimizing a major renovation project on the principal headquarters designation. Based on geographical location, facility age and size comparisons Raritan and Somerville Borough Police Departments were chosen as secondary precincts. The Raritan Borough police facility has a total of 1,684 square feet and the Somerville Borough police building consists of 2,500 square feet. Considerations were also addressed regarding local government support of the Regionalization Project, vehicle maintenance issues, court space, possible expansion of the current police building and the availability of other municipality owned space that could be utilized for a police function. Raritan Borough Administrator Jaxel and Somerville Borough Administrator Sluka both believe the current buildings could not be expanded without a referendum mandate from its citizens. The Raritan and Somerville government administrations are initially supportive of pursuing this issue

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further though both entities desire more information prior to a formal commitment being decided upon.

An example of similar issues faced by both municipalities is vehicle maintenance and Municipal Court issues. Raritan and Somerville administrators would be willing to explore a county fleet maintenance plan as both utilize private garages for police vehicle repairs. Raritan and Somerville have a total number of thirteen (13) and seventeen (17) vehicles in their respective police fleets. The Raritan Municipal complex currently houses the Somerville Municipal Court proceedings one evening per week.

The Township Administrators of Bridgewater, Somerville, Raritan, Bound Brook and Branchburg have all been contacted and have given their various opinions based on the information available at this time. Costs and the maintenance of police services to their respective towns/residents are the overriding concern.

# Somerset County Police Consolidation Plan

## Facilities Summary Report – Precinct 4

Lt. Vornlocker

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the available facilities in Precinct Four of the Somerset County Police Consolidation Plan and their potential use. Precinct Four is comprised of Montgomery, Manville, Hillsborough, Millstone and Rocky Hill. Of the five municipalities, Montgomery, Manville and Hillsborough are currently served by their own municipal police force, while Millstone and Rocky Hill are served by the New Jersey State Police.

For purpose of this study it was determined that Precinct Four would require 17,350 sq. ft. of space to accommodate the projected number of officers, civilian support staff and associated space requirements (see below) as determined by other sub-committees. The goal of this sub-committee was to determine if a current facility and/or facilities could be utilized to satisfy this need.

<b>Title/Space</b>	<b>Total personnel</b>	<b>Square footage requirements</b>
<b>Chief</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Deputy Chief</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>250</b>
<b>Captain</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>500</b>
<b>Admin Assistants</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>Lieutenants</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1,400</b>
<b>Sergeants</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1,100</b>
<b>Detectives</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1,750</b>
<b>SRO</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1,000</b>
<b>Patrol Officers</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>4,900</b>
<b>Civilian support staff</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1,200</b>
<b>General</b>		<b>5,100</b>

<b>Space</b>		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>17,350</b>

Current Facilities

1. Montgomery Police headquarters is part of the Montgomery municipal building. It is 5642 sq. ft. and there is no other usable space within the municipal building and there is no available space for building expansion. Additionally, from a geographic standpoint, the Montgomery facility is at the southern end of the proposed precinct.
2. Manville Police headquarters is a stand-alone building built on a relatively small lot surrounded on all sides by roadways, and thus unable to be expanded. It is 8000 sq. ft. in size and parking is limited.
3. Hillsborough Police headquarters is part of the Hillsborough municipal building. It is 12,470 sq. ft. and the only usable space within the municipal building is the municipal court facilities adjacent to police headquarters. If this space was available Hillsborough would meet the required 17,350 sq. ft. and the municipal complex would provide for adequate parking.

Facilities Sub-Committee discussions

In late 2011 the Facilities Sub-Committee met on three occasions and it was determined that our focus would be to determine if the consolidation of Precinct Four could be accomplished by:

3. Housing the entire precinct (patrol, detective, traffic, specialty and support staff) in one existing facility; or
4. Housing the entire precinct in one existing facility with modifications and/or additions; or
5. Splitting the precinct functions up among two existing facilities (i.e. patrol in one facility and detective in another).

After a thorough review of the available facilities the sub-committee ranked the potential use of facilities as follows:

1. The first option is not possible, as no existing facility is large enough to satisfy the requirements.
2. The second option could be accomplished by utilizing the Hillsborough site and have it house the entire precinct. This would require annexing

the adjacent municipal court space and retrofitting it for police use. This would also put the precinct stationhouse at the most centered location geographically in the precinct.

3. The third option could be accomplished by utilizing the Hillsborough site as the primary site for the precinct and the Manville site for the detective functions. This option, while not ideal, would enable the Manville facility to serve the significant amount of walk-up traffic that currently exists in that municipality.

Fleet maintenance, a secondary facilities issue, was also discussed by the sub-committee. For Precinct Four, only Hillsborough expressed any interest in continuing fleet maintenance on a pay for service basis with the county and they are the only municipality in the proposed precinct that currently performs maintenance and repair functions. Manville utilizes outside vendors for all maintenance and repair and Montgomery has contract employees (bid contract) providing those services for its fleet.

After discussion the sub-committee felt that option two, utilizing the existing Hillsborough facility and annexed municipal court facilities, was the most practical.