

## 28 parcels removed from Emerson redevelopment zone

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**EMERSON** — Nearly 30 properties have been removed from the borough's controversial downtown redevelopment zone.

The Borough Council voted unanimously Tuesday to accept a recommendation from borough planner Brigitte Bogart to take 28 parcels out of the zone because they have been redeveloped and updated.

Council members noted that they wanted to move quickly with the decision, so that the business owners would know they were out of the zone. The council also voted Tuesday to amend the redevelopment zone map to reflect the changes.

More than 80 parcels on Kinderkamack Road, from just north of Hartland Avenue to the Oradell border, had been included in the zone.

Owners of property within the zone have objected to their inclusion, arguing that it could hurt their ability to develop, sell or maintain their property.

They have also raised concern because the borough has the power to take properties within the zone via eminent domain.

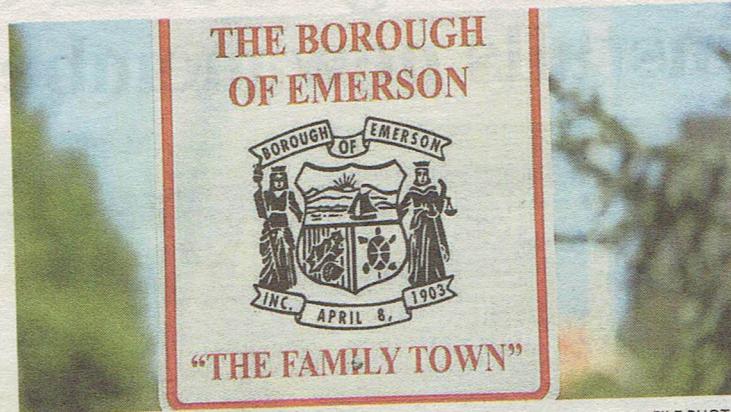
Bogart recommended earlier this month that entire property blocks be taken out of the zone, including Block 603, which encompasses Emerson Plaza West, and Block 606, which includes the Dunkin' Donuts and the Emerson Cleaner on Kinderkamack Road.

The planner also recommended the removal of most of Block 610, which includes properties along Kinderkamack Road between Ackerman Avenue and Allison Way.

Other notable properties that Bogart recommended be taken out are the Dairy Queen, the Unity and Oritani banks, and the Emerson Hotel.

The properties in Block 419, where redeveloper JMF Properties wants to build a mixed-use complex, were addressed in a previous study conducted by Bogart. The council voted 4-1 last month to have them remain in the redevelopment zone.

Business owners still in the



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redevelopment zone wanted the council on Tuesday to clarify what they need to do to have their properties taken out of the zone.

"I've been in the town 40 years," said Bob Petrow, who owns an auto body shop on Chestnut Avenue. "My retirement and my pension are in that business. I want to know what I need to do to be taken out of the zone, because I'll tell you right now I'm not letting you guys take my property."

Councilwoman Danielle Di-

Paola said she wanted the borough to authorize Bogart to study the other parcels in the zone further, to see if any additional properties could be taken out.

"I want all the business owners to have some clarity as to the future of their property, so I want us to act on this as quickly as possible," DiPaola said.

DiPaola requested that the authorization be put on the next council meeting agenda. That meeting will take place on March 7.