

PRESS
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Developers' Qualifications Sought for NPDC/Skillman Village

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Township of Montgomery is inviting developers to share their qualifications and be considered to take part in the planned redevelopment of the unique 256-acre North Princeton Developmental Center (NPDC) property. A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) has been issued to collect the qualifications of appropriate developers to create a renewed "Skillman Village" where, in keeping with the Township's vision:

"This will be a thriving cultural, educational, recreational and civic hub within a pedestrian-oriented, campus-like environment where innovative elements of sustainable design are seen throughout the site and the buildings. The public lawns, plazas and amphitheater are vibrant gathering spots for the community to enjoy art shows, theatrical plays, outdoor music events and public symposia. Shops, studios and fine dining are mixed in with new and expanding businesses including health-oriented, research and high tech facilities to create high-quality jobs, services, and arts/culture venues."

"We are excited to begin the national search to find the best of the best in redevelopment," stated Planning Director Lori Savron. "Our goal is to partner with a redeveloper to blend old with new to create a truly memorable place. There is a limited time for developers to throw their hat in the ring."

The Township will work with the most comprehensive multidisciplinary team assembled to redevelop this unique property. The Township will accept concept plans/proposals for the entire property or a portion of it. Examples of some of the special features of this property include Sylvan Lake on the Rock Brook with its beautiful views and frontage, open meadows with views of the Sourland Mountain range, historic brick buildings of unique design including a theatre, train station, and power plant, and century old tree-lined avenues. Having set redevelopment guidelines, the Township now will consider concept plans and determine the optimal land use configuration and density of development. Ultimate plans will be based on factors such as market conditions, traffic impact, the Township's vision plan, the State Development and Redevelopment Plan, the capacity of the sewage treatment plant and the Township's desire to recover its costs.

The "Request for Qualifications and Concept Plan" (RFQ) is available on the Township's website at www.montgomery.nj.us or can be obtained by contacting Ms. Savron at the Planning Office at 908-359-8211 ext. 206. The RFQ also is being advertised/noticed in key publications (online and on paper) for planners, architects, redevelopers, green builders and experts in sustainable design, and preservationists.

Pre-proposal meetings are scheduled for August 9th and September 6th. Proposals are due back by Friday, September 22nd, 4:00 p.m. Top ranked respondents will meet with Township representatives during the

week of October 9 and will be pre-qualified by the Township to submit a full proposal. It is the intent of the Township to enter into a contract with the selected redeveloper within 12 months of the Township taking title to the site.

On July 21st, Governor Jon Corzine signed legislation authorizing the sale to the Township, clearing the way for Montgomery to take these next steps in market analysis and planning.

Montgomery Mayor Louise Wilson stated, "Montgomery now has the green light to undertake an extraordinary project. Governor Corzine is going to be pleased with the outcome, and we are very grateful for his support."

In a related step, on July 20th the Township Committee authorized funds to ensure the restoration of Sylvan Lake and its dam. The Montgomery Township Committee has authorized approximately \$27 million in bonds to finance the purchase, environmental remediation, demolition, dam repair, lake restoration, insurance and sewage treatment plant upgrade. Under the terms of the deal, Montgomery can recover, through sale of land or other means, all but the purchase price of \$5.95 million before sharing additional proceeds with the state.

After declaring the property surplus in 1996, the State in 1998 shut down NPDC. The site originally housed the New Jersey State Village for Epileptics. In 1952 it became the NJ Neuropsychiatric Institute, and later was called the North Princeton Developmental Center. Since the turn of the 20th century, the site had been an institution for people with disabilities ranging from epilepsy, which was poorly understood when the original Village was established, to severe psychiatric or developmental disabilities. As the North Princeton Developmental Center, the site also housed people recovering from severe addictions.

"There's so much yet to do in order to create Skillman Village as a focal point of this community," said Mayor Louise Wilson. "We'll do our very best to keep our residents informed of and involved in the process. People are very excited about the possibilities but are also aware of the practical realities and constraints, given things like traffic volume and the importance of protecting nearby neighborhoods. We have our work cut out for us."

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