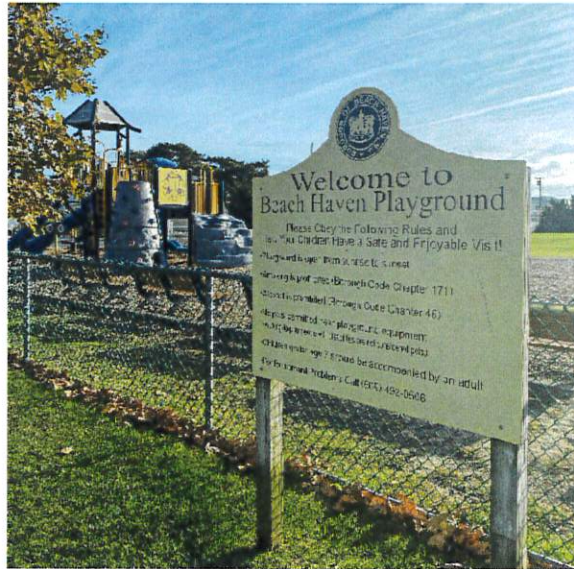


**Environmental Impact Assessment**  
**for**  
**Nelson Avenue Park**  
**Jake's Law Playground Funding Application**



**Borough of Beach Haven**

**Ocean County, New Jersey**

**December 15, 2024**

Prepared by:  
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443 Atlantic City Boulevard  
Beachwood, NJ 08722  
732-244-1090

  
Frank J. Little Jr. P.E., P.P.

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

Nelson Avenue Park and Playground is comprised of 1.84 acres and provides a children's playground as well as an open ball field and six frequently used pickleball courts. A permanent restroom building is also available for public use at the southwest corner of the site. This park area encompasses nearly the entire block and is located within a predominately residential area yet is within short walking distance of the Borough's southern-most Business District.

The Borough proposes to demolish the existing playground, which is nearing the end of its useful life, and construct an inclusive playground space with areas dedicated to quiet play and shade as well as renovate the existing restroom building to accommodate a family/assisted-use toilet room. It's anticipated that these amenities will accommodate children and their families from all six municipalities that comprise Long Beach Island including the Boroughs of Beach Haven, Ship Bottom, Surf City, Harvey Cedars, and Barnegat Light as well as Long Beach Township and nearby mainland communities such as Stafford and Barnegat Townships.

Jake's Law encourages the construction of inclusive playgrounds designed with standards exceeding those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act which will be accomplished by constructing the new playground within the footprint of the existing playground area. The proposed park improvements will include demolition and clearing of the site, grading to mitigate potential stormwater ponding in the park area, soil erosion & sediment control, safety surface design elements, new inclusive playground equipment, a new quiet play area, perimeter fencing, additional shading by means of trees and canopies that will cover 20% of the inclusive play area and family/assisted-use bathroom modifications to comply with Jake's law. Additional details related to the proposed improvements can be viewed within the attached concept plan.

The objective of the proposed project is to enhance the existing park to be more inclusive and accessible to all through standards exceeding those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The intention and purpose of the proposed design improvements are to ensure that all children have access to the playground regardless of their physical abilities or neurodiversity and to create an all-inclusive area for not only the residents and vacationers of Beach Haven, but for all those who spend time and enjoy Long Beach Island and its surrounding areas. There are no known playgrounds with similar intentions in nearby communities.

This project will not be multi-phased; instead, all construction and site amenity installations will be completed within 5 months of groundbreaking.

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

### **Vegetation**

Vegetation within the project site consists of landscaping shrubs and plants with some scattered trees. The area is primarily a maintained lawn area and disturbed area consisting of concrete and mulch within the playground equipment area. Upon completion of construction, topsoil, seed, mulch and London Plane trees will be installed.

### Wildlife

There are no threatened or endangered species or critical habitats mapped onsite according to NJDEP Geoweb. It is important to note that since the proposed project area has been previously disturbed for the original construction of the existing playground, there are very limited environmental impacts anticipated to natural resources.

### Geology, Topography and Soils

The majority of the site is classified as Psammaquents, sulfidic substratum (PstAt) which is 0 to 2 percent slopes, and frequently flooded. To the east of the playground is Urban land-Hooksan complex (USHOOB) which is 2 to 10 percent slopes. The proposed improvements will not alter the soil composition, site geology and any changes to topography will be minor in nature and only proposed to help with drainage and stormwater runoff.

### Water Resources/Hydrology

Nelson Avenue Park is located approximately 200 FT from Barnegat Bay and 600 FT from the Atlantic Ocean. The project site is located within the Barnegat Bay Watershed Management Area as is the rest of Beach Haven Borough and also within Effective FEMA Flood Zone AE Base Flood Elevation 8.0. At the time of construction, the proposed restroom rehabilitation will meet minimum FEMA Flood Regulations for elevation, dry or wet floodproofing.

### Historic/Archeological Resources

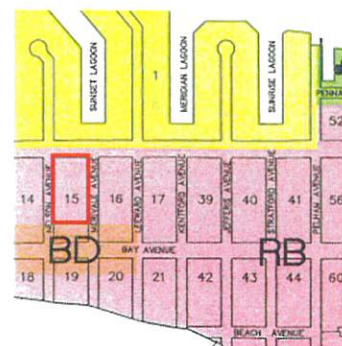
According to NJDEP Digital GIS Data, the site is not located within a designated historical area nor impacted by any archeological resources.

### Transportation/Access to Site

Nelson Avenue Park is easily accessible by Ocean County Road 607, locally known as Bay Avenue, and is positioned adjacent to Merivale Avenue, West Avenue, and Nelson Avenues, which are all residential collector streets with a speed limit of 25 MPH. The site is surrounded by parallel parking spaces within these existing Borough rights-of-way on the north, south and west sides of the lot which provide adequate parking for playground users as many walk or ride bicycles to this playground from the surrounding residential neighborhood. Beach Haven is known as a walkable town with numerous sidewalks and bicycle lanes for safety.

### Adjacent Land Uses

As shown in Attachment G, the project site lies within the RB – One Family/Two Family Residential Zoning District and abuts the BD – Business District. The Beach Haven Sewerage Authority is across the street on Nelson Ave where all other surrounding lots are residential use with one commercial use. Beach Haven is a resort town so there is a significant increase in vacationing population during the summer season.



Borough Zoning Map

## **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED ACTION**

### **Affected Resources and the Significance of Each Impact**

Due to the nature of the site being previously disturbed for the construction of the existing playground and the objective of improving the park to be accessible and inclusive to all children, no significant impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposed project. There are no negatively affected resources as a result of the proposed project and no significant impacts to any natural resources. A positive impact is improving the park area to be accessible to all children, including those with disabilities, which will help to benefit the community as well as provide an improved facility with improved safety, access, and inclusivity.

### **Short-term and Long-term Project Impacts**

Any negative short-term impacts associated with the construction may include roadway disruptions or disturbances causing noise, odor, aesthetics, etc., to residents, however, these will be temporary in nature and will be fully alleviated at the conclusion of construction.

Long term, this improved playground design will allow inclusivity, advanced safety, and be structurally designed for longevity within a coastal climate are all positive long-term impacts associated with the proposed project.

### **Anticipated Increase in Recreation and Overall Use**

Over time, increased use is anticipated at the Park as the Borough is a seasonal community with population surges in the warmer months and New Jersey is experiencing increased trends outdoor recreational opportunities being sought by residents. With this strengthening demand for outdoor recreation and sporting facilities, the proposed playground improvements will continue to be utilized by the growing community within Long Beach Island and local municipalities.

As such, it is inherent that the structures on site are updated periodically to ensure safety standards are met and prolonged use of the facility. Furthermore, the construction of this proposed upgraded inclusive playground and family friendly restroom will be designed with standards exceeding those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act so every child may be able to use the facilities as it is the first of its kind in the local area.

### **Adjacent Environmental Features Affected**

Adverse impacts to off-site properties are not anticipated as a result of this project. There will be no trees removed or vegetation disturbed for project completion. No environmentally sensitive areas or T&E species habitat will be disturbed as a result of the project and impacts to the site, which lies within a non-wave action FEMA Mapped Flood Zone, will be mitigated to the maximum extent practicable.

### **Permits Required for Project**

This park improvement project will require an Ocean County Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Permit as more than 5,000 SF of disturbance is proposed as well as a local Building Permit

from the Borough Construction Department. No additional local, county or state permits are anticipated.

#### **Natural Heritage Data Request Form**

As shown in Attachment I, the proposed improvements are situated on a presently developed site and there are no mapped T&E species present on site according to NJDEP Digital GIS Data (Geoweb). As such, the proposed project is not anticipated to impact any threatened and endangered species, and a Natural Heritage Data Request form was not required.

#### **If/How the Project may be Impacted by Sea Level Rise**

The site lies within a FEMA Mapped Special Flood Hazard Area and faces the same exposure to sea level rise as other structures and community amenities within the Borough. The NJDEP Strategic Climate Action Plan states flooding and storm events are becoming more frequent and severe in New Jersey, and as a result, Nelson Avenue Park may experience increased flooding conditions. However, the proposed playground improvements are structurally designed to account for wind loads, buoyancy rates and to resist hydrostatic pressure in cases of a storm event and/or flooding and all improvements will comply with the Uniform Construction Code as required.

### **ALTERNATIVES OF THE PROPOSED ACTION**

Due to site size limitations and existing site conditions, there are no all-inclusive playground sites within the Borough. There are no proposed alternatives for the proposed project, as the existing playground will be improved to comply with the standards exceeding those required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. As such, the only alternative is a “no build” which would not create a new and upgraded inclusive playground for all children, especially those with disabilities, to use the recreational area safely. As such, the proposed project is encouraged by both the Borough Council and the public as evident in the large scale community survey response. No alternatives are proposed.

### **MITIGATING MEASURES**

Based on review of the Green Acres Program for Park Development, specifically the Jake’s Law Playground Grant Application Requirements, the proposed project complies with regulations pertaining to improving the existing playground and restrooms within the Nelson Avenue Park.

As with any form of development, certain unavoidable impacts such as noise, dust, or odor may occur, however, the project team has incorporated a design that minimizes these impacts to the greatest extent possible. Beach Haven Borough is a fully developed community that has recently completed numerous structural, utility and neighborhood improvement projects due to severe damage caused by Superstorm Sandy and, as a result, is capable and experienced in adverse impact mitigation for projects of similar scope and scale as well as more complex ones.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Site Location Map

Attachment B: USA Topo Map

Attachment C: USGS Imagery Topo

Attachment D: Soil Classification Map

Attachment E: FEMA Flood Mapping

Location FIRMette

Effective FIRM Map

Preliminary FIRM Map

Attachment F: Tax Map

Attachment G: Zoning Map

Attachment H: Color Photos

Attachment I: Historic Districts

Attachment J: Qualifications of Preparer

Attachment A: Site Location Map  
Source: Google Maps



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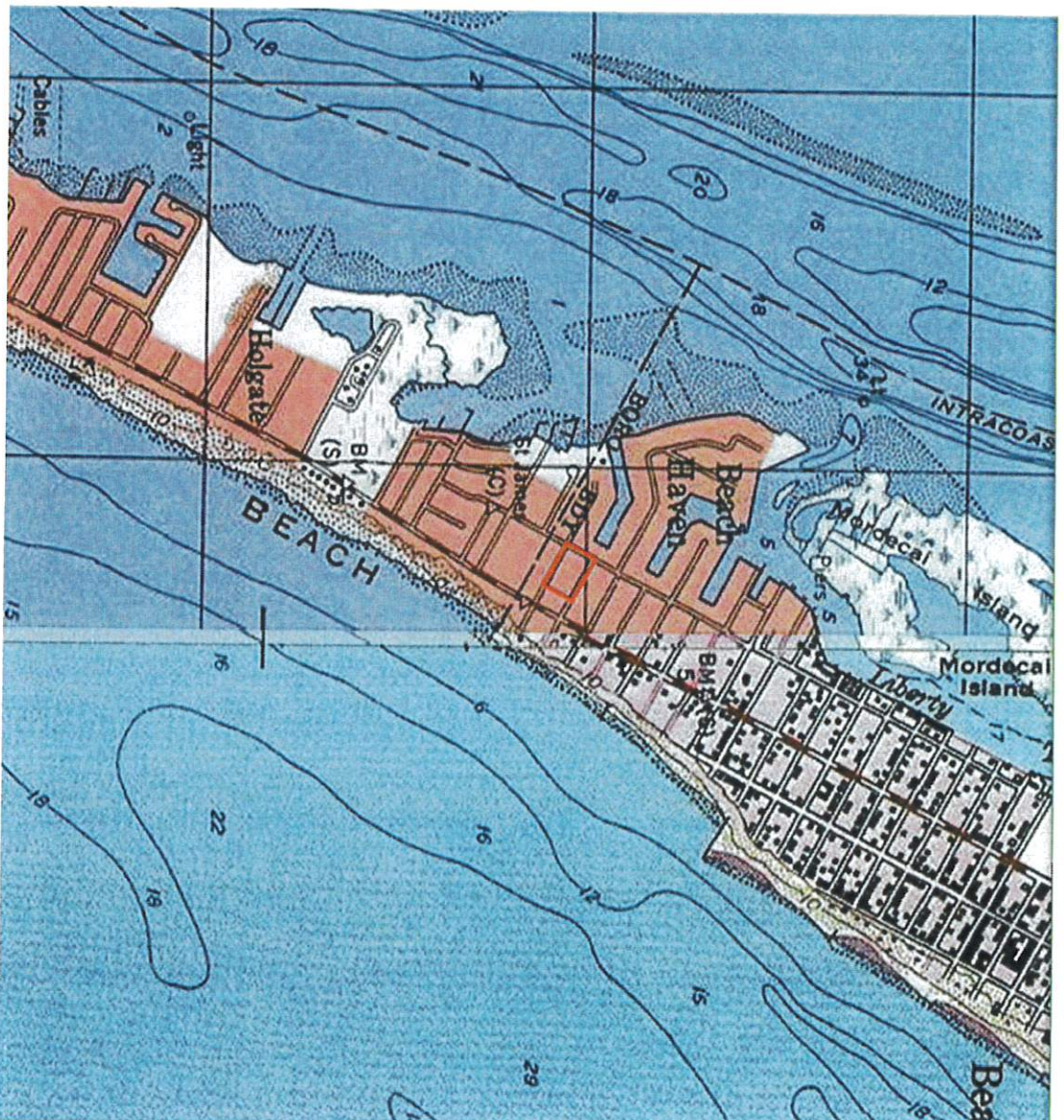
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Attachment B: USA Topo Map  
Source: USGS The National Map



Attachment C: USGS Imagery Topo

Source: USGS The National Map



Attachment D: Soil Classification Map  
 Source: Web Soil Survey, National Cooperative Soil Survey




**Map Unit Legend**

Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
PstAt	Psammaquents, sulfidic substratum, 0 to 2 percent slopes, frequently flooded	1.5	68.1%
USHOOB	Urban land-Hooksan complex, 2 to 10 percent slopes	0.7	31.9%
<b>Totals for Area of Interest</b>		<b>2.1</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**MAP LEGEND**

Area of Interest (AOI)

 Area of Interest (AOI)

Soils

 Soil Map Unit Polygons

Attachment E: FEMA Flood Mapping  
 Source: FEMA Map Service Center  
 FIRM Map 34029C0592F, effective date of 9/29/2006  
 FIRM Map 34029C0592G, preliminary date of 3/28/2014

# National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette



## Legend

- SEE FIS REPORT FOR DETAILED LEGEND AND INDEX MAP FOR FIRM PANEL LAYOUT
- SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS**
    - Without Base Flood Elevation (BFE) Zone A, E, XFF
    - With BFE or Depth Zone AE, AD, AH, VE, SR
    - Regulatory Floodway
  - OTHER AREAS OF FLOOD HAZARD**
    - 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard, Areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile Zone 1
    - Future Conditions 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard Zone 1
    - Area with Reduced Flood Risk due to Levee. See Notes. Zone 1
    - Area with Flood Risk due to Levee Zone 2
  - OTHER AREAS**
    - no SCREEN Area of Minimal Flood Hazard Zone 1
    - Effective LOMRs
    - Area of Undetermined Flood Hazard Zone 3
  - GENERAL STRUCTURES**
    - Channel, Culvert, or Storm Sewer
    - Levee, Dike, or Floodwall
  - OTHER FEATURES**
    - Cross Sections with 1% Annual Chance Water Surface Elevation
    - Coastal Transect
    - Base Flood Elevation Line (BFE)
    - Limit of Study
    - Jurisdiction Boundary
    - Coastal Transect Baseline
    - Profile Baseline
    - Hydrographic Feature
  - MAP PANELS**
    - Digital Data Available
    - No Digital Data Available
    - Unmapped
- The pin displayed on the map is an approximate point selected by the user and does not represent an authoritative property location.

This map complies with FEMA's standards for the use of digital flood maps if it is not void as described below. The basemap shown complies with FEMA's basemap accuracy standards.

The flood hazard information is derived directly from the authoritative NFHL web services provided by FEMA. This map was exported on 10/28/2024 at 4:37 PM and does not reflect changes or amendments subsequent to this date and time. The NFHL and effective information may change or become superseded by new data over time.

This map image is void if the one or more of the following map elements do not appear: basemap imagery, flood zone labels, legends, scale bar, map creation date, community identifiers, FIRM panel number, and FIRM effective date. Map images for unmapped and unmodernized areas cannot be used for regulatory purposes.

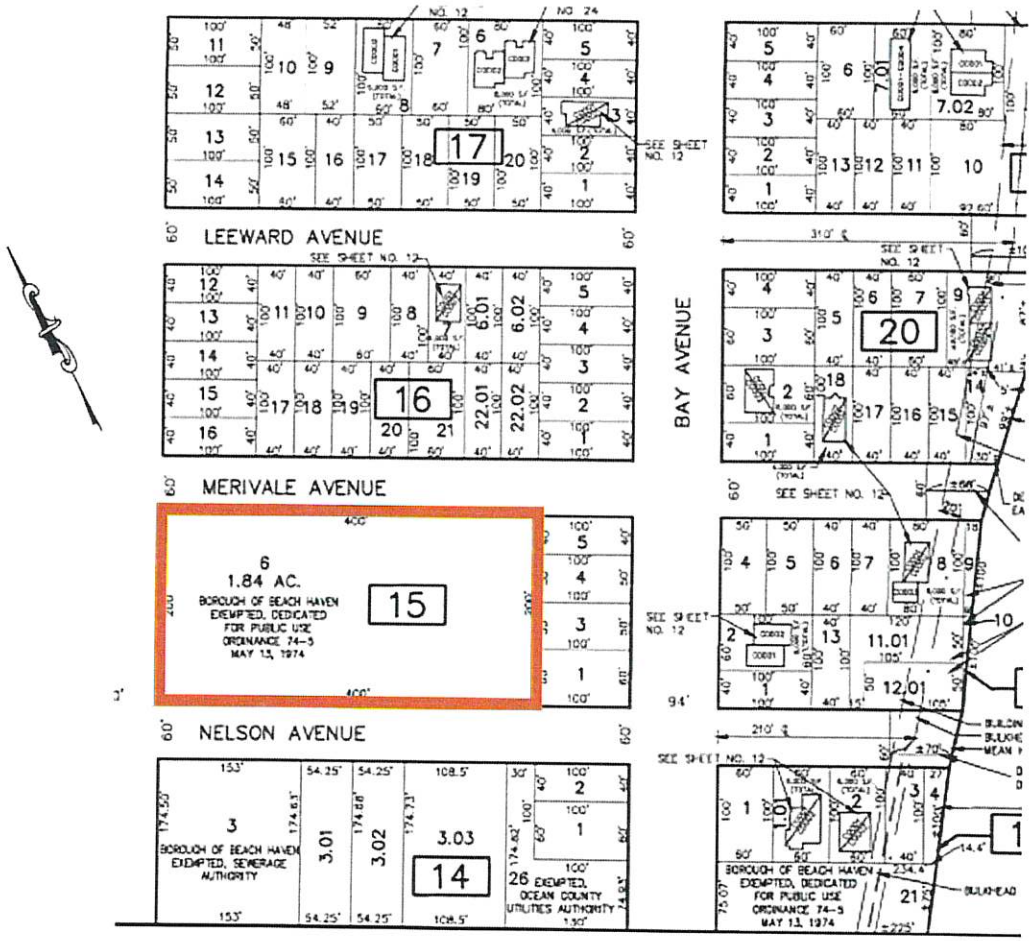
Basemap Imagery Source: USGS National Map 2023





# Attachment F: Tax Map

Source: Borough of Beach Haven Tax Map



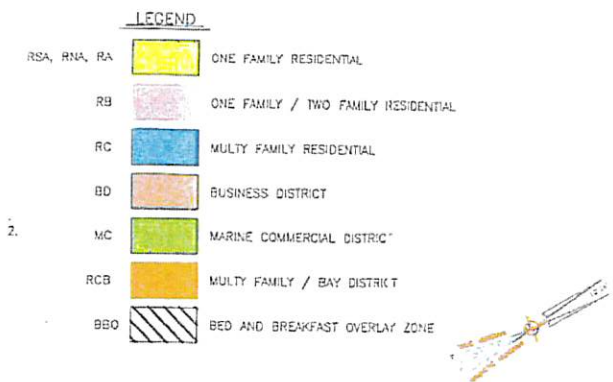
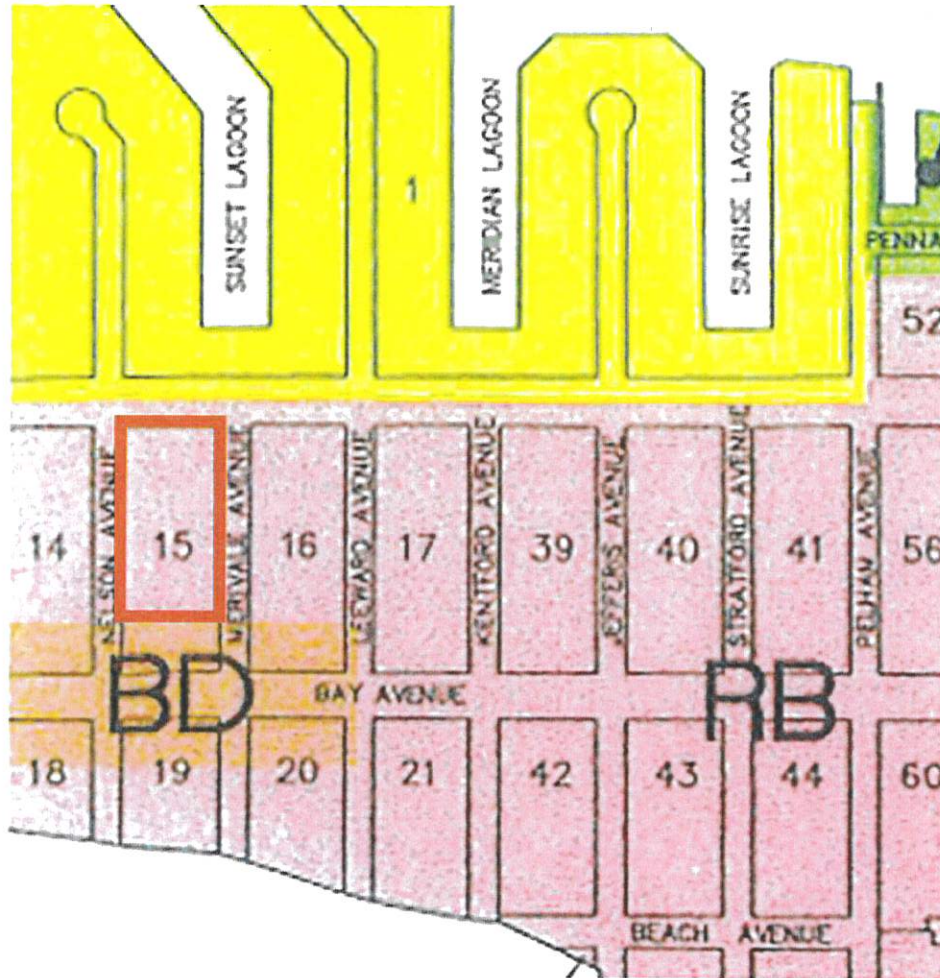
Site Location



Site Location



Attachment G: Zoning Map  
 Source: Borough of Beach Haven Zoning Map



Site Location

# BOROUGH OF BEACH HAVEN

OCEAN COUNTY NEW JERSEY

## ZONING MAP

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THIS IS THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP REFERRED TO IN SECTION 212-4 OF ORDINANCE NO. 2002-4 OF THE BOROUGH OF BEACH HAVEN, N.J., DATE OF ADOPTION APRIL 8, 2002, PREPARED FEBRUARY 12, 2022, BY BOROUGH ENGINEER FRANK J. LITTLE, JR., P.E., P.P. OF OWEN, LITTLE AND ASSOCIATES, INC., 443 ATLANTIC CITY BLVD., BEACHWOOD, NJ 08722.

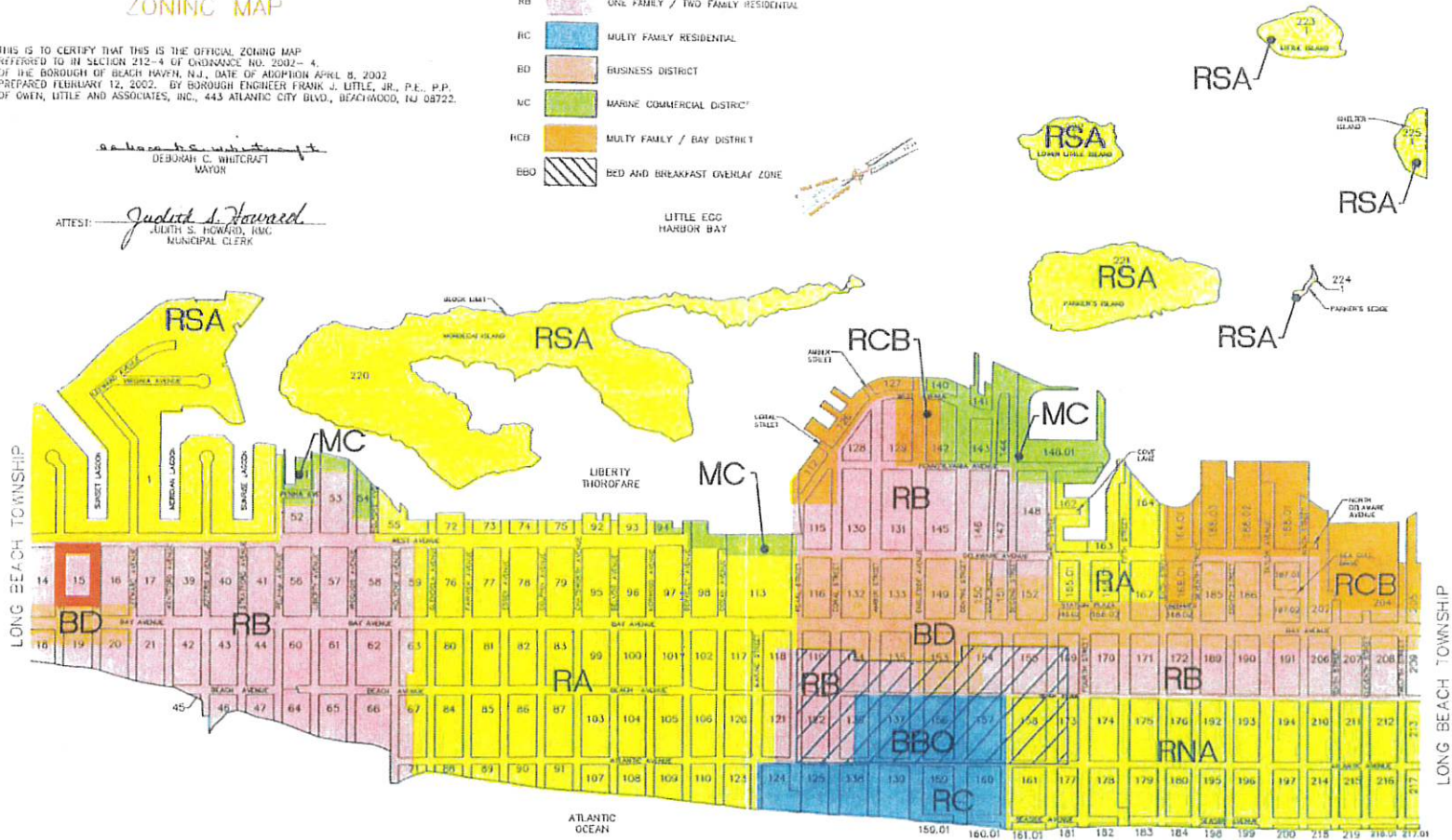
*Deborah C. Whitcraft*  
DEBORAH C. WHITCRAFT  
MAYOR

ATTEST: *Judith S. Howard*  
JUDITH S. HOWARD, I.M.C.  
MUNICIPAL CLERK

### LEGEND

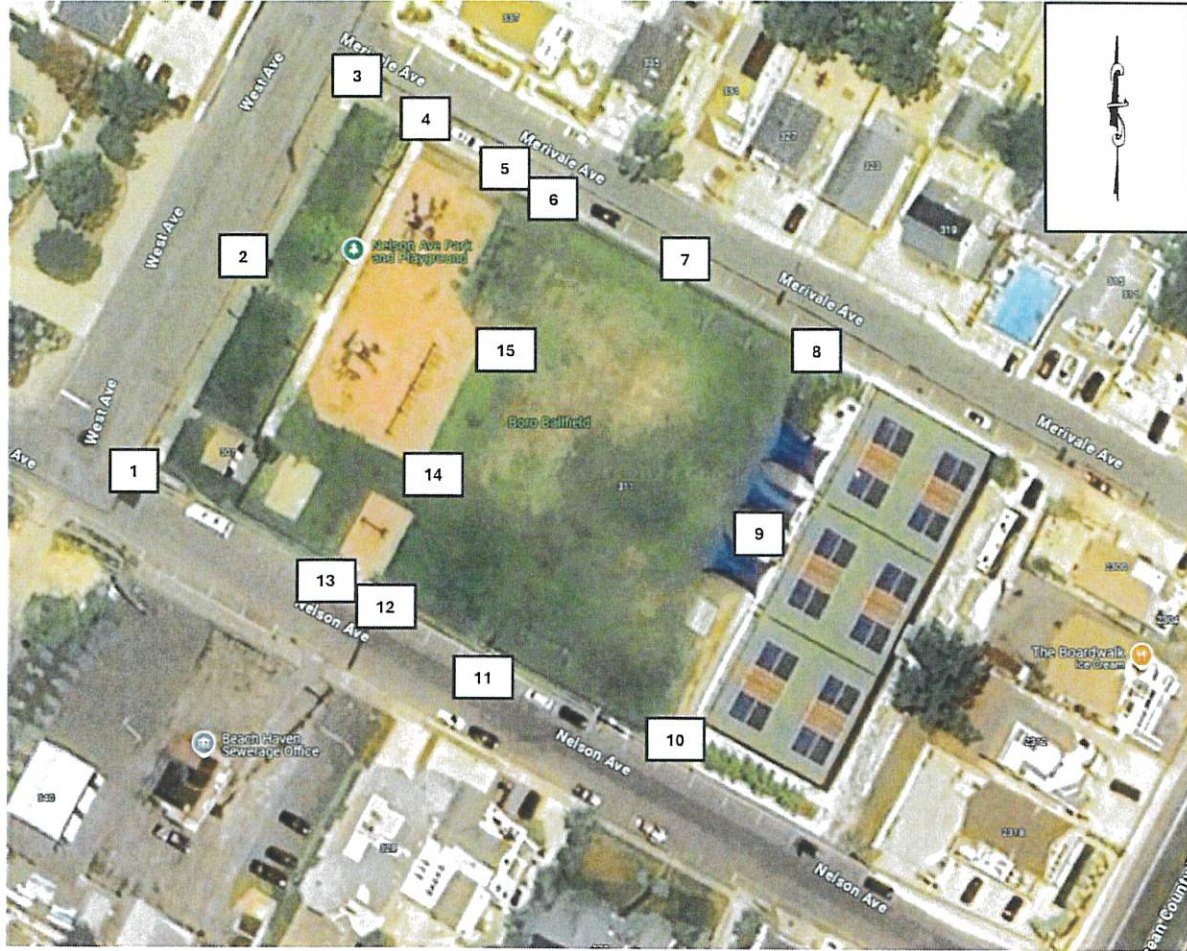
- RSA, RSA, RA ONE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- RB ONE FAMILY / TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- RC MULTI FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- BD BUSINESS DISTRICT
- MC MARINE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
- RCB MULTI FAMILY / BAY DISTRICT
- BBO BED AND BREAKFAST OVERLAY ZONE

LITTLE EGG  
HARBOR BAY



Site Location

Attachment H: Color Photos  
Source: Google Maps, Site Inspection





At point 1 facing East.



At point 2 facing Southeast.



At point 3 facing South.



At point 4 facing South.



At point 5 facing Southwest.



At point 6 facing South.



At point 7 facing Southwest.



At point 8 facing West.



At point 9 facing Northwest.



At point 10 facing North.



At point 11 facing Northeast.



At point 12 facing Northeast.



At point 13 facing North.



At point 14 facing North.



At point 15 facing Northwest.

Attachment I: Historic Districts

Source: LUCY, NJ CRGIS Oline Viewer



## FRANK J. LITTLE, JR., P.E., P.P., C.M.E. – PRESIDENT

### PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS:

Bachelor of Science  
Rutgers University, 1974  
Major: Civil Engineering

Professional Engineer:      New Jersey  
   Pennsylvania

Professional Planner:      New Jersey

Certified Municipal  
Engineer:      New Jersey

Professional Affiliations:      ASCE  
   NJSME  
   NSPE  
   OCMUAA  
   OCSPE

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Mr. Little represents more than 40 years of experience in planning, design and construction management. He has served as a consulting engineer to various communities and municipal utility authorities as well as private clientele. His experience and responsibilities include preparation of economic feasibility studies, wastewater flow studies, detailed design of wastewater treatment and collection systems, water supply, storage and distribution systems, valuation studies, technical reports and specifications, roadway and drainage design, land use studies, master plan and subdivision and site planning and design.

He currently serves as the Municipal Engineer and Land Use Board Engineer in the Borough of Barnegat Light, Borough of Beach Haven, Borough of Harvey Cedars, Borough of Ship Bottom, Township of Stafford, Borough of Surf City, Township of Long Beach, Township of Eagleswood, Township of Bass River and Borough of Tuckerton.

Mr. Little has been instrumental in coordinating the development of GIS mapping through various grant programs in New Jersey for the municipalities of Long Beach Township, Borough of Beach Haven, Borough of Harvey Cedars and Borough of Ship Bottom.