

Development Data

The Land Development Review Section of the Morris County Planning Board is staffed by three planners and one data control clerk. The office handles all development applications which consist of subdivision plans and site plans submitted to the Morris County Planning Board for review and approval.

The Land Development Review Committee meets at least once a month, depending on the volume of applications, to review the development applications processed by the staff. At each regularly scheduled monthly County Planning Board meeting, the full Board votes on the “Report of Actions Taken on Development Plans” which contains recommendations of the Committee as well as a complete summary of all development activity processed through the office each month.

A combined total of 435 subdivision plats and site plans (including revisions) were submitted to the Morris County Planning Board for review in 2008. Of those applications submitted, 279 were reviewed and reports issued to the applicants through their respective municipal planning boards and boards of adjustment. Another 156 applications received cursory review but were exempt from formal County review and approval.

Revised Submissions

As a result of municipal and county planning review, many development applications are revised and re-submitted one or more times. By counting only new development applications, and not those that are revised, one can get an indication of either growth or decline in development from year to year.



Section II of this report contains Tables I through VIII which present specific development information for Morris County's 39 municipalities. Charts A through G within Section I are based on those tables and show development activity for 2008 in contrast with the previous nine years. The observations and comments offered in Section I make frequent reference to the tables of Section II as well as the charts contained herein.

A significant portion of the development applications submitted to the Morris County Planning Board consist of resubmissions of revised drawings in response to municipal and county reviews. Often, development applications will continue into the following year. Table III (Section II) provides information on those development applications continued from the prior calendar year(s). Those development applications are only counted as new subdivision plats and site plans in the year they were first submitted to the Morris County Planning Board for review. The date when development will actually occur is difficult to predict since economic and market conditions will vary the outcome.

Table III, (Section II) shows that 19 revised preliminary subdivision plats (residential and non-residential) were submitted from the prior calendar year(s) for 358 building lots. Seven (7) revised residential site plans for 1,144 units were resubmitted in 2008. Also, 49 revised site plans for non-residential development were resubmitted in 2008 for 870,766 square feet of floor area.

New Submissions

Based on the development applications submitted to the Morris County Planning Board over the last 10 years, general development trends in the residential and non-residential sectors can be identified.

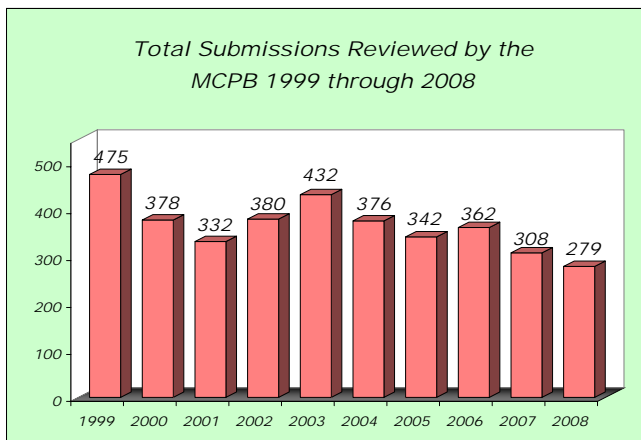


Chart A

As seen in Chart A, the total number of submissions reviewed for 2008 was slightly lower than in 2007. It is

lower than the recession level of 2001. However, Table 1 (Section II) shows that the total of 42 preliminary plats and 45 final plats (including revisions) that were reviewed in 2008, was slightly higher than compared to the 41 preliminary plats and 34 final plats (including revisions) reviewed in 2007 (Please refer to the 2007 Development Activity Report). Minor subdivisions not affecting County roads and not affecting County drainage facilities were deemed exempt from formal review.

Also, 174 site plans (including revisions) were reviewed by the County in 2008 which is slightly less than the number of site plans (including revisions) reviewed in 2007 (Please refer to the 2007 Development Activity Report). These projects either front along County roads or consist of at least one acre of new impervious surface and therefore, potentially affect County drainage facilities. Site plans for projects not fronting along County roads which do not meet the one acre of new impervious surface criteria are deemed exempt from formal review.

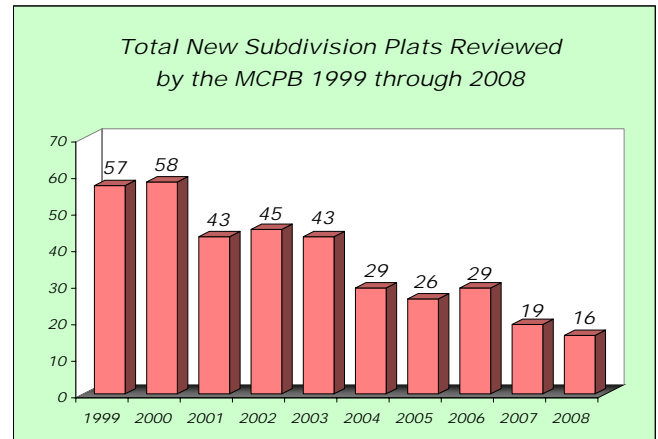


Chart B

As seen in Chart B, the total number of new residential subdivision plats submitted was down slightly from 2007. Residential activity still remained sluggish for 2008. New development activity for the year is presented in Table II (Section II). The County Planning Board received 16 new preliminary subdivision plats for 77 lots compared to 19 new preliminary plats for 137 lots submitted in 2007. This lower number is an indication of the scarcity of developable land either vacant or available for redevelopment. Small residential subdivisions continued to be common in 2008. If the number of preliminary subdivisions continues to decline, it will affect the number of lots available for residential development in the coming year(s).

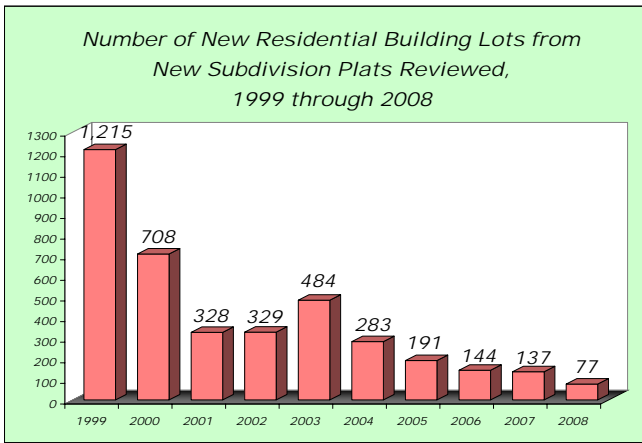


Chart C

As seen in Chart C, the number of new residential building lots has not rebounded from the 1,215 peak level of 1999. The year 2008 saw the lowest number of lots on record produced by new preliminary subdivisions. There had been a noticeable improvement in 2003 but a dramatic decline occurred in 2004 and the decline continued through 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008.

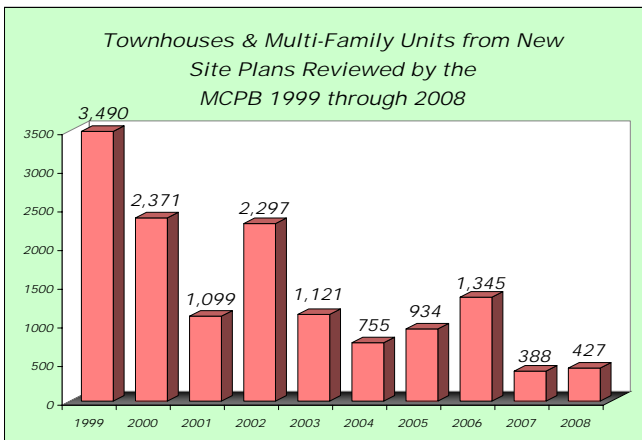


Chart D

In addition to single family home subdivisions, site plans for apartments, townhouses, and age-restricted adult housing were submitted to the County for review. Table II (Section II) shows that a total of 8 new residential site plans for 427 dwelling units were submitted during 2008 compared to 9 new residential site plans for 388 dwelling units submitted in 2007. Due to a downturn in the housing market during 2007, a steep drop in new dwelling units occurred which reversed a three-year trend of increases starting in 2004. The number of units improved slightly from 2007 but growth is expected to be gradual as the housing market works its way out of a recession. Two sites in Hanover Township accounted for 300 of the 427 dwelling units.

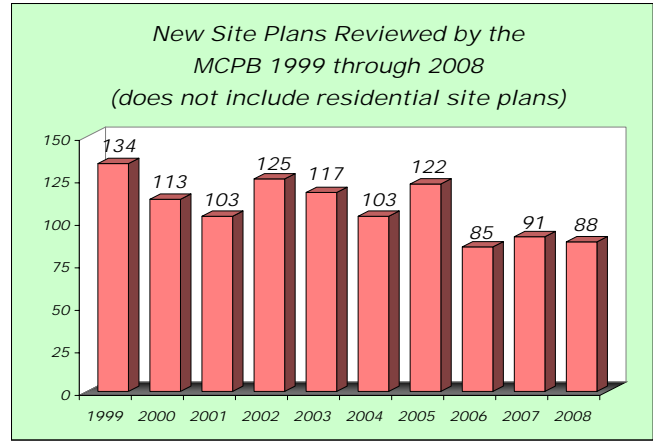


Chart E

As seen in Chart E, the total number of new non-residential site plans submitted for 2008 decreased slightly from 2007. New development activity for the year is presented in Table II (Section II). The Morris County Planning Board received 88 new non-residential site plans in 2008 compared to 91 in 2007.

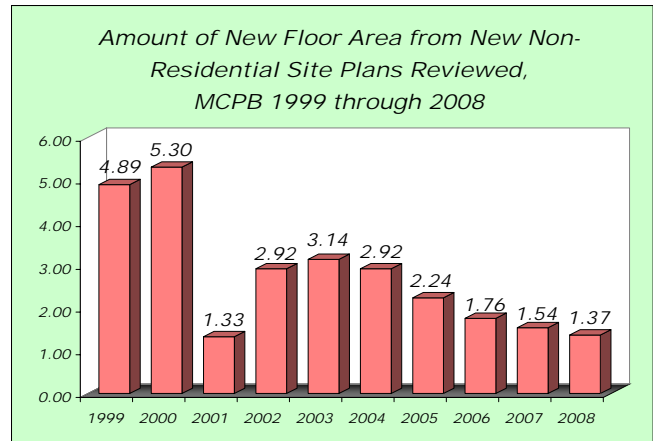


Chart F

As seen in Chart F, non-residential floor area has not rebounded from the 5.3 million square feet that occurred during the peak year of 2000. A trend reversal from a low 1.37 million square feet for 2008 will depend on availability of developable land and redevelopment of existing properties, and financial markets recovering to provide financing.