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## Honeywell redevelopment may add \$3.6M to Morris Township, NJ, tax base

Honeywell officials looking into environmental pollution at the site

By MINHAJ HASSAN · STAFF WRITER · December 1, 2010

MORRIS TWP. — About 150 people attended a meeting to discuss Honeywell International's plans to redevelop its headquarters on Columbia Turnpike and heard discussion about the additional \$3.6 million in local tax revenue that could be produced but also how the development might change the nature of the township.

Honeywell, which has 1,200 jobs at the Columbia Turnpike site, filed a proposal with the planning board last month but has not filed an application to redevelop the 147-acre headquarters located at the intersection of Columbia Turnpike and Park Avenue.

Donald Clinton, an architect working on the plan, said at the Monday night meeting that the company does not yet have formal plans for the redevelopment other than demolishing eight of the current 11 buildings at the site.

Proposals for the site include:

- A plan for 893,000 square feet of office space, a 250 room hotel measuring 162,500 square feet and 313 town houses totaling 615,500 square feet.

- Another plan calls for 825,000 square feet of office space, the hotel, 230 townhouses and a continuing care retirement community consisting of 416 units.

A fiscal analysis report said the project could produce \$3.6 million in additional revenues for the township, school system and county, than what the property currently produces in revenues.

The township revenues from that land would rise from \$336,000 to \$1.29 million, the report said. The hotel is projected to pay annual taxes of \$275,000, the report said.

Despite the large number of townhouses proposed, experts said only 39 children are projected to live

in there, a finding that was met with skepticism by many of the residents attending the meeting.

The homes are largely targeted to empty-nesters and young professionals, the presenters said.

Honeywell officials stressed that the proposal is part of a "general development plan," a Municipal Land Use Law designation that provides flexibility.

"We're testing the range of uses," said Tom Melman, a Honeywell official.

One resident, John Gotto, asked if Honeywell has entered into a binding agreement with the state that would guarantee the corporation would remain in Morris Township regardless of the outcome of this project.

Melman said the company intends to remain in Morris Township, but hasn't entered into any formal agreements.

Former Committeeman Jeff Grayzel said the complex could fundamentally change the character of the township.

"We move here because of the open space," he said. "This really transforms that way of living. It's not really (what) Morris Township is all about."

While environmental issues of multi-acre land were not discussed at Monday night's meeting, the township's Technical Coordinating Committee has been looking into that matter, township engineer Jim Slate said. The land has had several instances of

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contamination, much of which took place when Allied Chemical still operated its facilities there.

Hazardous substance discharge reports issued by the Department of Environmental Protection showed chemicals such as chloroform, halon, ethylene, motor oil have contaminated the soil.

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