

NJ Highlands Council
TAC Charrette
March 28 and 29, 2006
Land Use Planning/Housing/Green Construction (Group 2)

TAC Charrette Problem Statements

Problem Statement #1 – How can we use the regulatory framework to build consensus at all levels of government about the importance of balancing environmental, economic and social sustainability?

1. Visioning with stakeholders; need dedicated funding source to address/meet the vision
 2. Educate stakeholders about data, capacity analysis within the mandate; growth/economic beyond 88 towns
 3. Regulatory Framework – allows for technical training; program development outreach professional development, include real estate agents; developers
 4. Communications method for building consensus
 5. Incentives and Disincentives (Energy Star funding)
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1. Regulatory basement to be established – the minimum std.
 2. Reg. accomplish objectives of the Act; Reg's are not the part of building consensus
 3. Reg. Framework = Act itself
Mechanism for coordinating needs to be balanced
 4. The Act is about protecting the environment - will not be even or balanced at the end
 5. Consensus is necessary and visioning particularly for the planning area
 6. Ecosystem capacity needs to be understood
 7. Capacity of static/dynamic resources
Mapping associated
 8. Linkages between the data (capacity analysis) and the Mandates
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10. Balance within the mandate appropriate locations

Problem Statement #2 – How do you empower municipal entities to articulate and act upon a sustainable vision for their community and the region? Vision for positive change; does not mean no growth, but appropriate or better growth

1. Guide investment into appropriate area
Educate
2. Educate/Vision local knowledge as a means to empower municipal entities; provide technical resources
3. “Go out and sell it” – Real benefits identified/understood
4. Def. of sustainable – subjective, needs to be defined as part of the implementation
ID touchstone for sustainability
5. Scenario planning with towns
6. Do not limit to municipalities, Counties individually
Granting of Highlands Council allows for regional group of counties and municipalities –
i.e. Raritan-Highlands Compact needs to allow for inter-municipal grants

7. Balance growth beyond the region
Ripple effect of the Act
Data impact-output
8. Make data/capacity readily available to the public
Include outreach to gather data based on local knowledge as input to the process
9. Variety and choice of housing options; development that supports that vision;
redevelopment is critical infrastructure; innovative/alternative technologies – DEP
approval methods; green building
10. Tax system burden/structure
11. Increase grants/in-kind contributions to allow for municipalities to get tech. assistance
12. Direct contact with state agencies
13. Cross-pollination of Government programs
14. Local level re-structure governance
Can't keep the same stovepipes

Problem Statement #3 – How do you foster opportunities for shared services and inter-municipal agreements?

1. The incentives in the Highlands Act itself
 - clearing house for growth management within and beyond the region
 - Highlands Council clearing house for incentives
 - provide a menu of options
 Highlands-Raritan Compact- good example/model
2. Training; technical resources; data sharing
3. Empower existing regional organizations via the Council
6. Use lessons learned from other Regional Planning entities and other examples of sound balanced planning principles
7. Use conformance process for extended growth management in the Region
Voluntary growth – address Affordable Housing issue/concerns
Shouldn't get legal shield without meeting affordable housing obligation; constitutional obligation

Problem Statement #4 – How do we ensure that regional development decisions are based on an accurate understanding of all existing and planned infrastructure?

1. Add green infrastructure to the list (Ex: Garden State Greenways)
2. Housing obligations need to work with COAH to look at additional objects
3. Get an accurate understanding of that infrastructure; identify infrastructure reality
4. Evaluate infrastructure within Land Use Capability Map; Infrastructure/Resource conflicts identified
5. Highlands Council fund/support updated WQMP work with DEP; educate and include (?)
6. Local Knowledge about infrastructure feedback loop; develop a model – use national examples “COMSTAT” process
7. Make sure a municipality level of information is easily understood – RMP audience municipal officials
-Indicators support a feedback loop
8. Incentives identified for addressing conflicts of infrastructure/resource

9. Various levels of government need to have a consistent message and stick to it about infrastructure; Vertical and horizontal integration of agencies – MOU or MOA consistency
10. Empower innovative/alternative technologies; Regulatory regime built on performance standards approach
 - Identify and understand the road blocks; barriers
 - Link performance standards; get rid of stovepipes
11. DEP missing opportunities others have overcome with alternative systems; Ex: PA approach to wastewater management -US Green Building Council
12. Re-align existing funding programs to a paradigmatic change to performance standards
13. In order to get conformance a town must agree to go through a visioning process; mandatory component

Problem Statement #5 - How do you incorporate innovative/alternative approaches as a means to achieve RMP goals?

1. BPU Clean Energy Program leverage; Clean Energy Star Program funding incentive (reinstate)
2. Council partner with Builders, Leeds, affordable housing , Pilot Program – Demonstration Project including partnership with private communities
3. Market Driven/Incentive mechanisms evaluated from existing national examples

Problem Statement #6 – How can we integrate mixed land uses and other smart growth components into communities in order to foster attractive, walkable, livable communities with a strong sense of place?

1. Mechanisms for financing that support smart growth principles to help stop the fragmented approach to development (Ex: Lending institutions)
2. Define for a community an identity or vision that supports a sense of place
3. Use regional approach to support a sense of place
Support with visioning, technical support; need to look both forwards and backwards; Regional context needs to be strong
4. Tax Base sharing incentives should be used by Highlands Council to implement RMP goals
5. Council sit down; roll up sleeves to work with each town to identify and plan; as a means to guide and empower the opportunity
6. Bring better design into this whole process
Highlands Council could use a Design award approach or other mechanism for incentive for Innovative/Alternative design; Green Building, Historic/cultural approaches
Infill in existing suburban areas – APA project
7. How does zoning influence development?
8. Is there really a desire in the market of the Highlands Region for walkability; connectivity
9. Asset mapping for communities as a tool
10. Use graphics to demonstrate density and mixed use

Problem Statement #7 – How can we ensure that communities provide quality housing that represents a variety and choice of options for people of all income?

1. Lack of Property Tax reform an impediment
2. Range and Definition of Affordable Housing needs to be addressed
 - Low – 0-50
 - Middle – 50-80
 - Moderate – 80-120-%
3. McMansion white elephants need to be addressed within RMP and housing market
4. Strong local development
 - Evaluate Employer/Housing relationships
5. Agency difficulty in working towards affordable housing
 - COAH a concern
 - Interagency MOA between COAH and Highlands Council
6. Underutilized land; Greyfields; Brownfields as opportunity for housing; develop incentive program
7. Inclusionary housing design should be improved
8. Identify and Empower best management practices for addressing housing (Ex: Madison for inter-mixed housing)
9. Highlands Council evaluate COAH Growth Share implications for the region
 - Round 1 or Round 2 obligations a concern
 - Highlands Council needs to take innovative approach to address this beyond the existing framework
10. Make conformance process include COAH filing as a mandatory/required component of conformance approval
11. Streamlined approval process as an incentive
12. Council serve a technical resource and clearing house for affordable housing implementation; advocate for better funding; equitable distribution of housing funds

Problem Statement #8 – Examples of Best Planning Practices

1. 10 Towns in Great Swamp
2. Lancaster PA – Urban Growth containment
3. Leeds Neighborhood Certification Program
4. Meadowlands Regional Plan (new)
5. Pinelands Regional Plan
6. Portland Urban Growth Plan
7. Franklin Twp/Woodstown – Conservation Planning
8. Tax Base sharing for center-like development

STRATEGIES

- 1) Encourage innovative land use, design and construction approaches for regional Master Plan implementation.
 - Regulatory framework based on “Performance Standards”
 - Encourage private sector innovation
 - Highlands Council serve as an advocate for development and use of innovative/alternative technologies, e.g. Wastewater, storm water, green building
- 2) Ensure state agency consistency in support of the Regional Master Plan.
E.g. Plan Endorsement prioritized for towns proposing Highlands TDR Receiving
- 3) The Highlands Council should develop customized outreach and education packages including:
 - Visioning
 - Technical training
 - Scenario Planning
 - Asset Mapping
 - Graphics
- 4) Identify innovative finance mechanisms. E.g. work with financial sector on loans that support smart growth principles and the Regional Master Plan, allow the Highlands Council to grant to inter municipal and county groups, pursue tax base sharing.
- 5) Ensure that the Plan Conformance process includes a petition to COAH for substantive certification as a mandatory/required component of approval by Council e.g. minimize “builders remedy” litigation.
- 6) Ensure ongoing implementation of Plan Conformance e.g. develop a “feedback loop” model to communicate with stakeholders to insure success, develop indicators in support of the feedback loop model.