# The Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan turns 25

C ommission teaming up with several groups to hold groundbreaking conference and banquet to mark the milestone

his year marks the 25th anniversary of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan, the rules that govern land-use, development and natural resource protection in the state-designated Pinelands Area.

In celebration of the Plan's
Silver Anniversary, the
Pinelands Commission and a
group of organizations have
joined forces to organize and hold
a special Pinelands banquet and conference called "Regional Planning Comes of
Age."

The banquet will be held on Thursday, September 28, 2006 from 5:30-11 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency in New Brunswick, New Jersey. The event is being organized and carried out by the Pinelands Commission, the Pinelands Preservation Alliance (PPA) and members of the "Regional Planning Comes of Age"

Steering Committee, which is composed of representatives from numerous governmental and nonprofit agencies or organizations.

Former Governors Brendan
T. Byrne and James J. Florio,
will deliver speeches during the
banquet, along with Commission

Chairperson Betty Wilson. Governor Jon S. Corzine also has been invited to share his thoughts during the event.

Franklin E. Parker and Terrence D. Moore will be inducted into the PPA's Pine Barrens Hall of Fame during the banquet. Parker was the first chairman of the Pinelands Commission, and Moore was the agency's first executive director.

The "Regional Planning Comes of Age" conference is set for September 28-29 at the Hyatt, with courses to be held from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. on the 28th and from 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. on the 29th.

The conference will include plenary addresses and seminars on regional land use planning aimed at preserving natural and historic resources while strengthening communities in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast states. Hon. Bruce Babbitt, Robert Yaro, and Douglas Foy will deliver plenary addresses.

Babbitt served as Secretary of the Interior from 1993 to 2001, as Governor of Arizona from 1978 to 1987 and as Attorney General of Arizona from 1975 to 1978.

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# Pine lands C ommission approves agreement to close landfills at the Stafford Business Park

During its regular meeting on July 14, the Pinelands Commission approved an agreement that will enable Stafford Township's government to proceed with a plan to redevelop its Business Park as a means to pay for the environmentally safe closure of landfills onsite.

Under the Memorandum of Agreement reached between Stafford Township, Ocean County and the Pinelands Commission, Walters Homes, Inc. will properly close the landfills at its expense in return for the opportunity to redevelop the Business Park as a mixed use, residential office and commercial development.

"This agreement provides a detailed plan for Stafford Township to properly close landfills that are polluting groundwater and the Mill Creek, and it includes a multitude of significant environmental measures to offset the negative impacts on two rare plants and two rare animals, including the Northern pine snake," said John C. Stokes, Executive Director of the Commission.

Noting that efforts to find a way to close the landfills without impacting important habitat were unsuccessful, Stokes stated that Commission members were faced with a difficult choice.

"However, the agreement reinforces the water quality and waste management policies that are crucial parts of the Pinelands Commission's efforts to protect and preserve the region's natural resources," Stokes said.

The Stafford Business Park is situated on a 363-acre site located just south of Route 72. It is located within a Pinelands-designated Regional Growth Area, a land use area in which intensive residential and business development is authorized by the Pinelands Comprehensive

Management Plan. The Pinelands Commission approved the business park in 1990, with a plan for the development of 67 lots. Despite numerous marketing efforts, there are only 12 developed lots on the property, including a motor vehicle inspection station, an animal shelter, a recycling center and other buildings. The site also is home to a 55-acre licensed landfill and three unlicensed landfills that are polluting groundwater supplies and the nearby Mill Creek Stream with a number of constituents such as ammonia, arsenic, benzene and lead.

Remediating the unlicensed landfills and closing the licensed landfill with an impermeable cap will reduce the 41 million gallons of polluted leachate that the landfill produces each year. However, the work necessary to close the land-

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# Pinelands Commission approves agreement regarding redevelopment of the Stafford Business Park

#### **Continued from page 1**

fills and redevelop the business park will have an impact on habitat for rare plants and animals on the property and is not consistent with Pinelands regulations governing threatened and endangered plant and animal species and wetlands buffers.

The Commission determined that although the agreement allows activities that are not in strict compliance with Pinelands regulations, it is accompanied by measures that will, at a minimum, afford an equivalent level of protection of Pinelands resources than would be provided through the strict application of Pinelands standards.

Under the agreement, the Township will buy and deed restrict 570 acres of land for conservation purposes. A portion of the land will be located within the Mill Creek drainage area to help protect water quality, and the remainder will constitute suitable habitat for Northern pine snakes. Stafford also agreed to the following offsets:

∠Requiring its designated redeveloper to reduce by at least 50% the amount of pollution that directly enters Mill Creek from Route 72, where the highway crosses the creek;

trian oriented designs, reduce energy and water uses, improve indoor air quality and reduce pollution from stormwater runoff. The measures also should reduce non-point source pollution by as much as 96%;

ELimiting the amount of acreage on the capped landfill to be utilized for the relocation of Ocean County's leaf composting facility to 20 acres;



**Aerial Map of the Stafford Business Park** 

≥ Deed restricting the

area of the capped landfill and other open space on the redeveloped business park site so that those areas remain undeveloped in perpetuity and;

ZeRequiring its designated redeveloper to implement a Species Management Plan to help mitigate impacts on threatened and endangered plant and animal species. The plan must be designed to achieve the following goals: protect the threatened and endangered plant and animal species from harm during the implementation of the landfill closure and redevelopment plans,

reestablish the impacted plant species on the site and reestablish the impacted threatened or endangered animal species on or near the Business Park site, or at appropriate areas designated by the Pinelands Commission and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

In addition to those offsets, Ocean County has agreed to buy at least 75 acres of land containing suitable habitat for Northern pine snakes through its open space purchase program.

#### Commission certifies changes to Berkeley Township's master plan

During its regular meeting on June 9, the New Jersey Pinelands Commission approved changes to Berkeley Township's master plan and land use ordinances that significantly reduce development potential and protect important natural resources on a 290-acre tract in town.

The amendments to the township's master plan incorporate a number of zoning changes on land that is commonly known as the Margaret Major Haines tract and is located in the northeastern section of the Pinelands Area in Berkeley.

Under the revised master plan, the portion of the tract previously zoned as a Regional Growth Residential Zone will be reduced from 185 acres to approximately

50 acres. Meanwhile, the portion of the site that was zoned as a Forest Area Residential Zone will be expanded from 105 acres to 240 acres and will encompass the entire Jake's Branch watershed.

As a result of the zoning changes, maximum zoning capacity in the Regional Growth Residential Zone of the property is 150 units, or approximately 350 units less than the township's previously certified master plan would have permitted on the site. The Forest Area Residential Zone is limited to one single-family unit per 30 acres.

The original Forest Area boundary had intended to encompass all of the areas of the site located within the highly sensitive Jake's Branch watershed.

Berkeley Township adopted the zoning changes based on the fact that updated information shows the boundary between the piece of property in the Jake's Branch and Davenport Branch watersheds is actually further north than was thought when the Township's zoning plan was certified by the Commission in 2001, thereby justifying an expansion of the Forest Area on the site. The management area change is entirely consistent with the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan and the Commission's goal of precluding intensive development or disturbance in the Jake's Branch watershed.

# Tomasello chosen new Vice Chairman

C amden C ounty representative has served on the C ommission since 1986

Norman Tomasello was unanimously chosen as the new Vice Chairman of the Pinelands Commission during the panel's regular meeting on July 14, 2006.

A resident of Winslow Township, Mr. Tomasello has served as Camden County representative on the Commission since



Norman Tomasello

1996. After being chosen Vice Chairman, he was honored by the Commission for 10 years of dedicated service.

"Norm is a no-nonsense kind of guy who has the best interests of the

Pinelands at heart," said Betty Wilson, the Commission's Chairperson. "I appreciate his service to the Commission and look forward to working with him in his new role."

Mr. Tomasello retired after 50 years of operating a 110-acre fruit and vegetable farm in Winslow Township. He served as Mayor and Committeeman in Winslow for 15 years. There, he also served as

Public Safety Director and on the township planning board. He is Chairman of the Camden County Agricultural Development Board, and is a member of the County Mosquito Control Commission.

Mr. Tomasello also served as president of the Camden County Board of Agriculture for ten years and as Chairman of the Gloucester and Camden County Farmers Home Administration. Mr Tomasello is a member of the New Jersey Farm Bureau, on which he served as a past Director. He also is a found-

ing member of the Elm Volunteer Fire Company No. 1.

The Commission's Vice Chairman seat has been vacant since former longtime Commission member Alan Avery resigned from the panel in November 2005.

The Pinelands Commission consists of 15 members. Seven are appointed by the



Commission Chairperson Betty Wilson, pictured right, reads from a framed certificate honoring new Vice Chairman Norman Tomasello for 10 years of service on the Commission.

Photo/Paul Leakan

Governor of New Jersey. One is appointed by each of the seven Pinelands counties and one is appointed by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior. Members of the Commission serve staggered three-year terms and are uncompensated for their service.

### Pinelands C omprehensive Management Plan turns 25

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Babbitt is the author of "Cities in the Wilderness," which was recently published by Island Press, in which he lays out a new vision of land use in America and touts the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan as a successful land-use and natural resource conservation model. Babbitt currently serves as a director of the World Wildlife Fund.

Yaro is the President of the Regional Plan Association, America's oldest independent metropolitan policy, research and advocacy group. He is also a professor in Practice in City and Regional planning at the University of Pennsylvania.

Foy served as the first secretary of the Office for Commonwealth Development in Massachusetts from January 2003 to March 2006. Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney created the office to coordinate housing, transportation, energy and the environment, and to encourage more sustainable development in Massachusetts.

The conference features an impressive array of seminars addressing topics such as transfer of development rights, growth management tools, protecting water resources through regional planning, economic impacts of regional planning, using regional planning to preserve historic and cultural resources, cooperative planning across political boundaries, and regional zoning and land use regulation.

Seminars will also explore outstanding and developing examples of regional planning, such as the New Jersey Pinelands, the Adirondacks Park, the Long Island Pine Barrens, the Cape Cod Commission, Chesapeake Bay watershed initiatives and more.

Five representatives from the Pinelands Commission will join other seminar speakers during the conference, including Commission Chairperson Betty Wilson, Executive Director John C. Stokes, Chief Scientist Dr. Robert A. Zampella, Land Use and Technology Programs Director Larry Liggett and Chief Planner Susan Grogan.

Conference sponsors include the Fund for New Jersey, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the National Park Service, the Pinelands Commission, the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, PSE&G and the William Penn Foundation.

Members of the public are strongly encouraged to attend the Pinelands banquet and/or the "Regional Planning Comes of Age" conference. Detailed information about the banquet, conference seminars and speakers' biographies, as well as directions, hotel accommodations and on-line registration, is available by logging on to www.regionalplanningcomesofage.org or by contacting Mike Hunninghake at the PPA at (609) 859-8860, ext. 24, or Paul Leakan at the Pinelands Commission at (609) 894-7300.



# Pinelands National Reserve to be featured in new unigrid brochure

The New Jersey Pinelands Commission, along with its Pinelands Interpretive Plan partners the National Park Service (NPS) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Parks and Forestry, is working with a team of designers who will produce a brochure and map of the Pinelands National Reserve (PNR).

The project is being funded through a cooperative agreement between the partners, including \$25,000 from the NPS Pinelands Interpretive Office and a \$13,000 NPS Challenge Cost Share Program grant that the Pinelands Commission will match with in-kind services.

The brochures will be produced by designers from the National Park Services' Harpers Ferry Center.

Approximately 100,000 copies of the brochure will be printed and distributed throughout the Pinelands and other infor-

mation and visitor centers around New Jersey and surrounding states.

The brochures will be in full color and will be printed on recycled paper. The design will conform to the NPS' "Unigrid System." The designs of all new brochures produced by the National Park Service have been based on the "Unigrid System" format, a modular grid system for layout of text and graphics, since 1977. These brochures are easily distinguishable by their uniform designs that include a black band at the top and bottom of the page, standardized typeface and standard map formats.

The brochure will introduce visitors and tourists to the PNR and help them navigate through the area. The brochure also will help to raise awareness and appreciation of the Pinelands.

A Publication team consisting of a designer, writer/editor and staff members from the three Pinelands Interpretive Plan

partners has begun work on the project. A background report that identifies critical elements such as the audience, themes, mapping needs will be completed before a preliminary outline is produced.

Members of the Publications team will explore various locations of the Pinelands to get a better sense of region and its natural treasures. The themes listed below will be incorporated into the brochure's content:

∠ The environment: The Pinelands is a unique natural environment that is home to scores of rare plants and animals, large unbroken tracts of forest and a 17-trillion gallon aquifer that serves as the lifeblood of the region's ecosystem.

∠ Interaction: The diversity of the Pinelands' landscapes and humans interaction with this land continues to evolve.

The brochure will also feature a detailed map of the PNR that features Pinelands interpretative facilities, recreational destinations, the Batona trail, the Southern Pinelands Natural Heritage Trail, state designated Pinelands Management Area, and major roads.

The project began in early 2006 and could be completed during the summer of 2007.



The new brochure for the Pinelands National Reserve will conform to the National Park Services' (NPS) "Unigrid System," a layout and design format that has been used for all NPS brochures since 1977, including the brochure for the Great Egg Harbor River (shown above).

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#### Commission approves eight amendments to the Comprehensive Management Plan

The Pinelands Commission has adopted a series of a changes to the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP), the rules that govern land-use, development and natural resource protection in the Pinelands.

The amendments pertain to regulations regarding application review fees, the creation of a new overlay district for the

Garden State Parkway, municipal reserve provisions for Pinelands Regional Growth Areas, stormwater management, expansion of the Cape May Landfill, local communications facilities, cumulative costs for waivers and lot size variances and the pilot program for alternative design wastewater treatment systems.

The amendments are available for

review on the Commission's Web site: www.nj.gov/pinelands/cmp/amend.

The CMP has guided land-use and development in the state-designated Pinelands Area since it took effect on January 14, 1981.



# Commission endorses Sub-Regional Natural Resources Protection Plan for Southern Medford and Evesham

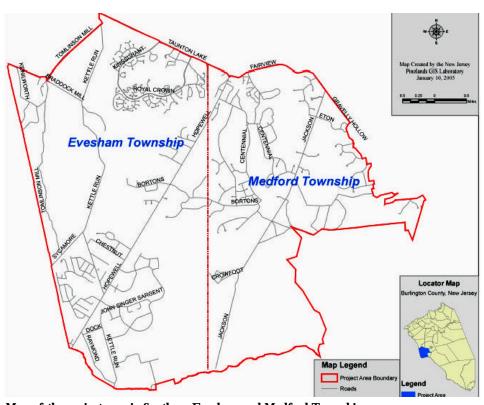
At its July 14 meeting, the Pinelands Commission voted unanimously to formally endorse a Sub-Regional Natural Resources Protection Plan for an ecologically sensitive area of southern Medford and Evesham townships. The plan was a collaborative effort between the Commission, Evesham Township, Medford Township and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

The Plan's study area encompasses the 22-square-mile southern portion of Medford and Evesham Townships. Although primarily rural in character, almost 75% of this area is designated for modest amounts of residential development under local zoning. However, data compiled in recent years has shown that this area has significant natural resources, including undisturbed sub-watersheds, as well as rare plants and animals.

"The Plan recommends an integrated program of strategies specifically designed to protect significant natural resources, particularly water quality, while avoiding future development conflicts," said John C. Stokes, the Commission's Executive Director. "This project is a model for collaborative resource protection planning - it involved more than 40 people representing various interests, including township officials, various state agencies, environmental groups, builders, planners, engineers and natural resource experts."

The Pinelands Commission received a \$73,000 grant from the William Penn Foundation in 2004 to fund efforts to develop the Plan. Shortly after receiving the grant, the Commission organized a Steering Committee composed of officials from the two townships as well as a representative from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the Commission. The Steering Committee appointed an 18-person Project Advisory Committee and a 17-person Technical Support Group to help guide the Steering Committee's decisions.

The three committees met regularly throughout 2004 to discuss and formulate a series of recommended regulatory and



Map of the project area in Southern Evesham and Medford Townships

non-regulatory protection strategies that are contained in the Sub-Regional Natural Resources Protection Plan.

The recommended regulatory strategies call for a number of zoning changes devised to reduce development and disturbance levels in high-quality natural resource areas. These strategies would reduce the project area's future zone capacity by 53%. Additional zoning strategies call for creating incentives to transfer all development out of high-value natural resource areas to areas more capable of accommodating it. Development that does occur would be clustered, resulting in the conservation of more than 80% of the properties being developed. Also, a green belt consisting of public lands, preservation areas and low-density zoning districts would be created through the mid-section of the area, which would help to protect the area's water quality and maintain biodiversity.

The recommended non-regulatory strategies include: land acquisition; promoting

land stewardship efforts through public education for homeowners, builders, planning and zoning boards; reducing water consumption through programs such as the beneficial re-use of wastewater for golf courses; and conducting surveys to identify the area's rare plants with the intent of helping public landowners, homeowner's associations and the municipalities to protect, manage and recover native plant populations.

The Plan concludes with a specific implementation strategy that identifies the various tasks that need to be undertaken and which parties or organizations are responsible for carrying out those tasks. By endorsing the plan, the Commission agrees to play a prominent role in helping the two municipalities and other involved organizations to accomplish the tasks and meet the objectives of the Plan.

The Sub-Regional Natural Resources Protection Plan is available on the Home Page of the Pinelands Commission's Web site (www.nj.gov/pinelands).

# 17th Annual Pinelands Short Course draws 375 people

Held at Burlington County College on March 4, 2006, the 17th Annual Pinelands Short Course attracted approximately 375 people.

The Pinelands Short Course is sponsored by the New Jersey Pinelands Commission and Burlington County

# Save this Date!

What: 18th Annual **Pinelands Short** Course

When: March 3, 2007

Where: Burlington **County College** 

College (BCC), which has hosted the event for the past two years. The Pinelands Institute for Natural and Environmental Studies, a program of BCC, also is a sponsor of the Short Course.

The popular educational

event featured nine new presentations while still offering attendees the opportunity to enjoy numerous popular presentations from the past.

The nine new presentations covered the following topics: a tribute to the work of Pinelands folklorist Herbert Halpert, environmentally-conscious art education, an indoor Pinelands field trip, threatened and

endangered wildlife, the forgotten town of Cedar Bridge, wildlife photography and programs on black bears, butterflies and fish in the Pinelands.

The event also featured popular programs from the past, such as a Pinelands overview, traditional uses of native Pinelands plants, Pine Barrens photography, traditional Pinelands music by the Sugar Sand Ramblers, long-distance migratory songbirds of the Pinelands, a history

of the Pinelands, turtles of the Pinelands, the Kirkwood-Cohansey aguifer and its effect on the environment, Pinelands fire safety, and an educational walking tour of the historic Whitesbog Village.

A high percentage of the attendees were teachers who wanted to learn more about the region, including ways to incorporate



Liz Jackson of the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife delivered a lively presentation on how to deal with black bears during the 17th Annual Pinelands Short Course at Burlington County College.

Photo/Paul Leakan

Pinelands studies into the classroom.

The Short Course is registered with the New Jersey Department of Education, and professional development credits are available to New Jersey teachers who attend the Short Course.

Discounted registration fees are offered to senior citizens and students.

Attendees at this year's event overwhelmingly gave the courses, presenters and facilities high marks. Many said they were impressed by the presenters' knowledge and enthusiasm.

Event organizers are exploring ideas and opportunities to build upon the success of the Short Course, including possible "spin-off" courses that may offered at different times of the year.

"There has been a considerable increase in the popularity of the Pinelands Short Course in recent years, as evidenced by the strong attendance and interest from people inside and even outside New Jersey," said Joel Mott, Public Programs Specialist with the Pinelands Commission. "We want to ensure that the event maintains its strong following by building upon the successes and perhaps offering the public more opportunities to learn about the Pinelands."



Participants conducted experiments on Pinelands vegetation, soil and water during Maria Peter's course "The Pine Barrens -- An Indoor Field Trip" at the March 4 Pinelands Short Course. Photo/Paul Leakan

### Pine lands C om m ission making progress on ecological integrity project

The Pinelands Commission has completed the first phase of its project to assess the ecological integrity of the Pinelands. The objective of the project is to provide a comprehensive review of landscape and watershed conditions throughout the Pinelands to better ensure that important natural areas, including those that provide habitat for threatened and endangered plant and animal populations, are protected.

Staff scientists have assembled available spatial data and reviewed relevant scientific literature on the relationships between land use and ecological integrity, emphasizing those that are directly relevant to the Pinelands ecosystem.

The following assumptions about the impact of land-use patterns on integrity form the basis for the assessments:

Landscape integrity:

∠ Wide-ranging Pinelands species such as timber rattlesnake, pine snake and barred owl are associated with large tracts of forest habitats.

∠ The best way to maintain characteristic plant and animal communities and ensure the preservation of viable populations of wideranging species is by protecting relatively large tracts of Pinelands forest habitats, including upland forest, wetlands, and water bodies.

Aquatic integrity:

An increase in the percentage of altered

land in a drainage basin results in changes in hydrology and water quality, which generally lead to changes in aquatic communities.

∠The best way to ensure the preservation of viable Pinelands lake, pond, and stream communities and populations of characteristic Pinelands species that comprise these communities is by protecting associated drainage basins.

Wetland integrity:

∠ An increase in the percentage of altered land in a drainage basin and the proximity of altered land to wetlands results in changes in hydrology and water quality that lead to changes in wetland communities.

Preliminary methods have been developed to evaluate landscape, aquatic, and wetland integrity based on land-use/land-cover spatial data. The landscape integrity assessment will rank over 32 million landscape units (each landscape unit is 100 square-meters), and over 7,000 drainage-basin units will be examined in the aquatic and wetlands assessments. The three integrity ranks will be used to develop a composite ecological-integrity score for each landscape unit and prepare an ecological-integrity map of the Pinelands. All of the integrity analyses are being conducted using Geographic Information Systems (GIS)



Along with areas of sparse vegetation cover preferred for nesting and denning, the northern pine snake (Pituophis m. melanoluecus) uses relatively large tracts of forest as part of its activity range.

Photo/Robert A. Zampella

software.

Dr. Robert A. Zampella, the Commission's Chief Scientist, presented the methods to the Commission's Policy and Implementation Committee during its meeting on July 20th.

The ecological-integrity map will be corroborated by comparing it to available naturalresource information, which may include water-quality, wetland, and aquatic-community data, threatened and endangered animal species locations, and threatened and endangered plant locations.

The final map will be used to identify consistencies and conflicts between ecological integrity, Pinelands Management Area designations, and build-out estimates.

Ultimately, the ecological-integrity assessment can be used to review and revise the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan.





Vegetation lines the tea-colored water of the Cedar Creek, which meanders through the historic Double Trouble State Park in the Pinelands.

Photo/Paul Leakan

#### Pinelands Excellence Program in Egg Harbor Township Moving Forward

In January 2005, the Pinelands Commission received a second grant from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation to continue the Pinelands Excellence Program. In the first program round the Commission worked with Winslow and Hamilton Townships to develop a "Livable Community Action Plan." During this most recent program round, the Commission is collaborating with Egg Harbor Township. The planning process began when Egg Harbor Township appointed 14 people to a community Visioning Team. This team, representing a broad cross-section of community interests, has had the core responsibility for guiding the planning effort.

The first step of the planning process was to select a team of professional community planning and design consultants. The consultants' work started with two rounds of community interviews - one in early February and a second in March 2006. At the same time the consultants began meeting with the Visioning Team. The objective of the first such meeting was to discuss community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). Through the meetings and interviews, the consultants identified four major

topic areas that have served as the structure for the community analysis and the initial planning strategies: Environment, Open Space and Recreation; Town/Neighborhood Centers and Development Patterns; Traffic and Pedestrian Safety; and Schools and Community Facilities.

On March 7th the first public meeting was conducted to review the findings of the SWOT analysis and to solicit input on these and any other topics of community interest. Nearly 100 Egg Harbor Township residents attended the meeting, and public input largely confirmed the issues raised by the Visioning Team.

Between March 7th and April 18th, the consultants held several meetings with the Visioning Team to explore each of the four major topic areas in detail. At the conclusion of the meetings, the consultants began developing initial strategies to respond to issues identified by the community. In mid-May a second public meeting was held to present these planning concepts to the Township residents. A third public meeting



Members of the Egg Harbor Township visioning team discuss community design strategies during a meeting in March.

Photo/Christine Graziano

was held in late June to present refined strategies that will serve as the basis for the Final Plan.

The consulting team is presently engaged in preparing the Final Plan document, which will be comprised of a full description of the community design strategies and detailed implementation program. The project is currently on schedule for completion by the end of October.





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