

CMP POLICY & IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE MEETING

This meeting was conducted both remotely and in-person
The public could view/comment through Pinelands Commission YouTube link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjfMNHG6Uas>

Meeting ID: 861 7042 1150
Richard J. Sullivan Center
15C Springfield Rd
New Lisbon, New Jersey 08064
July 29, 2022 - 9:30 a.m.

Members in Attendance – Alan W. Avery, Jr., Jerome H. Irick, Mark Lohbauer, Laura E. Matos (Chair)

Members Absent – Edward Lloyd

Other Commissioners in Attendance – Theresa Lettman, Davon McCurry

Commission Staff in Attendance (TDM Room) – Branwen Ellis, Susan R. Grogan, Charles Horner, Brad Lanute, Paul Leakan, Trent Maxwell, Jessica Noble, Steven Simone, Ed Wengrowski

Commission Staff in Attendance (Zoom) – John Bunnell, Stacey Roth

1. Call to Order

Chair Matos called the meeting to order at 9:33 am.

2. Adoption of Minutes from the June 24, 2022, CMP Policy and Implementation Committee Meeting

Chair Matos asked for a motion to adopt the minutes from the June 24, 2022, CMP Policy and Implementation Committee meeting. Commissioner Irick made the motion, and Commissioner Lohbauer seconded. All Commissioners voted in favor.

3. Executive Director’s Reports

Pemberton Township Ordinance 11-2022, adopting the Lakehurst Road Redevelopment Plan

Acting Executive Director Susan Grogan presented the staff’s findings on Pemberton Township Ordinance 11-2022, adopting the Lakehurst Road Redevelopment Plan (maps attached). Ms. Grogan provided historical context of the existing zoning that underlies the redevelopment area. She stated that the Regional Growth Area (RGA) portion of the redevelopment area was re-

zoned RA (Residential Age Restricted) in 1992 to encourage the development of an age-restricted community.

At the time, Pemberton's RGA was considered over-zoned, meaning the Township was providing more units than what the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) required. The zone was unique due to its Pinelands Development Credit (PDC) requirements; the Commission was concerned that Pemberton was zoned for many units but not many PDC opportunities. The RA Zone established a base density at only 0.33 units per acre, which is quite unusual in sewered portions of the RGA. The ordinance was also written to require use of PDCs if the developer wanted to increase that base density up to two units per acre.

Once PDCs are used to reach two units per acre, the ordinance allowed developers to add more age-restricted senior housing bonus units. It was a creative zoning method to encourage age-restricted housing at a certain density. The Commission's prime objective was to ensure that many PDC opportunities were accommodated in this zone.

Thirty years later, the RA Zone has still not been developed. A developer received a general development approval for the site in the 2000s but never proceeded. The Township is now working with the same developer on reviving the project, which the Township is interested in facilitating. The new project proposed is not significantly different than the original plan from years ago, though using a redevelopment plan allows the Township to work more closely with the developer.

Ms. Grogan referred to a map of the redevelopment area (attached), with Community Extension (CE) Zones depicted. She said there are approximately 60 lots in the redevelopment area, but the main lot encompasses most of the area. The white dotted line shows the boundary between Forest Area (FA) and RGA. The redevelopment plan permits 575 units that still must be age-restricted. All development must occur in the RGA portion of the area; only low-intensity recreation is allowed in the FA. There is a 40% set aside requirement for open space and recreational facilities included in the plan.

The redevelopment plan requires all units to maximize passive solar heating using architectural features where it is viable. Additionally, the redeveloper is required to offer active solar energy system purchase and installation options for rooftop installations on single family and townhouse units where appropriate. The plan does not require solar, but it does make it a potential option. Ms. Grogan said she hopes to see similar plans and requirements in other Pinelands municipalities.

Any lands that are set aside for open space must be deed restricted so that they are not available for further development. PDC requirements are built into the redevelopment plan, with Pemberton replacing the underlying zoning plan for the area. It has instead taken a simpler approach that the staff feels is more realistic. The new PDC requirement is for 25% of the market rate units; the required affordable housing units will have no PDC obligation.

This brings the redevelopment plan closer in line with the Commission's recommendations for density and PDC requirements. Ms. Grogan said that while the theoretical potential for PDCs is diminished, the original zoning proved not to be conducive for a large project. The actual

number of PDCs that could realistically be accommodated was significantly lower. To build all the units permitted in the RA Zone, the developer would have to redeem over 400 rights.

Ms. Grogan said staff felt this was too heavy an obligation to assign to one zone or property in Pemberton's RGA. In the past, there were few opportunities for the use of PDCs in the Township. More recently, new residential development potential and PDC opportunities have been accommodated through other redevelopment plans. These include the abandoned Rowan College at Burlington County campus and Browns Mills Town Center.

Ms. Grogan said she is much more comfortable with these densities and PDC requirements than she ever was with the provisions of the old RA Zone. She pointed out that under the current zoning, residential development is allowed in the FA at one unit per 17 acres. In the new redevelopment plan, no residential development is allowed in the FA; all units must be built in the RGA. The entire FA is expected to be set aside as open space and used only for low intensity recreation. She added that there are portions of the RGA with environmental constraints that would also remain open space.

Ms. Grogan said the staff recommends approval of the redevelopment plan, and that it is beneficial to the Township and the Pinelands Area. The plan clarifies that any access roads that are built for the residential development must meet all environmental standards laid out in the CMP. She noted various access roads had been proposed that had potential environmental impacts. She concluded that it is a better document and better approach than the old zoning plan.

Commissioner Lohbauer asked about the blue CE (Community Extension) Zones and if they are different from the rest of the area. Ms. Grogan said the CE Zones are not owned by the redeveloper, and that the redevelopment plan simply maintains their existing underlying zoning.

Commissioner Lohbauer continued that the project sounds fantastic, and that he is grateful to Pemberton for prioritizing preserving forested lands and incorporating requirements for renewable energy where practicable. He said it was very forward thinking. He also said the 115 PDC rights in hand are better than 411 rights in the bush.

Commissioner Avery asked how large the blue CE Zone was in the FA. Ms. Grogan said it was ten acres, which is not enough for a single-family home in the FA.

Commissioner Avery asked why the FA was zoned next to the RGA in this instance, which is uncommon in the Pinelands CMP. Ms. Grogan said this configuration may have been original to the CMP or negotiated with the Township in the 1980s.

Commissioner Avery asked if the property owner was the same in the FA and the RGA. Ms. Grogan said yes. He asked if the open space percentage included the FA. Ms. Grogan said the 40% open space requirement applies to the entire tract owned by the developer. Ms. Grogan mentioned there are other lands inside the RGA with environmental constraints, which would also remain undeveloped.

The Commissioner asked if the sewer system has the capacity to handle the new development. Ms. Grogan said that has not been raised as an issue as far as she is aware. Commissioner Avery

added that there is quite a bit of redevelopment potential in Pemberton now, including the old college and the prison site. Ms. Grogan said Pemberton was recently awarded a Pinelands Infrastructure Trust Fund (PITF) grant for water supply management.

Commissioner Irick asked for the size of the full redevelopment area. Ms. Grogan said that it is 718 acres, and the RGA portion is about 350 acres. He asked if the water supply is adequate or if new wells would be needed. Ms. Grogan said she did not think new wells would be necessary.

Chair Matos asked for a motion to recommend the ordinance to the full Commission in August. Commissioner Lohbauer made the motion. All voted in favor.

It was noted that Commissioner McCurry joined the meeting. Ms. Grogan clarified that Commissioners Lettman and McCurry are not members of the Committee and, as such, are not voting on any matter before the Committee.

Southampton Township Ordinance 2022-05, adopting a Redevelopment Plan for the Red Lion Diner Non-Condensation Redevelopment Area

Planning Specialist Brad Lanute presented the staff's findings on Southampton Township Ordinance 2022-05, adopting the Redevelopment Plan for the Red Lion Diner. Referencing a map of the redevelopment area (attached), he noted the area is approximately 20 acres, situated on the southwest corner of the Red Lion Circle where Route 70 intersects Route 206. It is located entirely within Southampton's Highway Commercial (HC) Zone and a Pinelands Rural Development Area (RDA).

The redevelopment area includes three lots under common ownership. One of the lots includes an existing restaurant and the other two are currently vacant. He described the goals of the redevelopment and the variety of commercial uses permitted in the redevelopment area. In describing the plan's development standards, he pointed out that there is a 25,000 square foot limit on the total gross floor area for the entirety of the redevelopment area.

Mr. Lanute noted that the redevelopment area contains one of the few vacant upland areas remaining in Southampton's Pinelands Area, and that the Township has desired additional commercial development in this area given its access to Route 70. However, prior attempts to develop the two vacant lots have been stymied by an inability to site new on-site septic systems due to depth to seasonal high water table issues.

The redevelopment plan addresses this constraint by requiring the replacement of the septic system servicing the existing restaurant with an advanced wastewater treatment system that would serve all proposed uses within the redevelopment area. The advanced treatment system is required to meet the CMP septic dilution standard of 2 ppm nitrate/nitrite.

Mr. Lanute described why, under a strict interpretation of the CMP, an advanced treatment system would not be permitted for new non-residential development in the RDA. He went on to describe how the redevelopment plan's approach draws upon the CMP's municipal flexibility provisions. He described the plan's land preservation component that serves to offset the

increased development potential allowed by the use of the advanced treatment system. The plan requires that for every 1,000 square feet of existing and proposed floor area approved under the plan, one acre of contiguous or non-contiguous land in the Township's RDA must be preserved via deed restriction. If the site was fully built out, it would require the preservation of 25 acres in Southampton's RDA.

Mr. Lanute described how the land preservation component was evaluated and the analysis provided by the Township to demonstrate realistic opportunities to meet the plan's land preservation requirements. He concluded that staff found the redevelopment plan's approach an appropriate use of the CMP's municipal flexibility provisions.

Commissioner Lohbauer said it was a great presentation and agreed that it was a creative approach to the problem. He said it makes sense that Southampton would want to focus development in this area. The Commissioner asked if a redeveloper or specific new commercial uses have been identified.

Ms. Grogan replied that the plan has been four years in the making, and a series of developers, redevelopers, and concept plans have come and gone. She said there is no specific plan but confirmed there is interest in developing the area. The diner owns the two adjacent lots, so the staff feels confident that the lots will be developed in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.

Commissioner Lohbauer asked if Southampton was contemplating a strip-type center at the site, saying the 25,000 square feet of retail space sounds like several stores lined up behind a parking lot.

Mr. Lanute said there are provisions that discuss shared parking access between the parcels, and there is flexibility for development of multiple buildings like fast food establishments.

Ms. Grogan said none of the plans she read envisioned a strip mall, but instead an expansion of the diner and an addition of new stores in the other two lots. They would be separate buildings, but with linked parking and transportation infrastructure.

Commissioner Lohbauer said he liked the approach the Township is taking and that he is supportive. He added that he would like to see the use of pervious parking surfaces.

Commissioner Avery asked Ed Wengrowski, Environmental Technologies Coordinator, if the advanced wastewater treatment systems normally used for single-family dwellings would work in a commercial development setting. Mr. Wengrowski said New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) permits would be required if flows exceed 2,000 gallons per day. There would be a permit discharge standard with a licensed operator that would monitor flows monthly; the NJDEP would reserve the right to impose fines if the site is not compliant.

Commissioner Avery continued that he did not think any of the Commission's septic systems could handle that load. Mr. Wengrowski said they could and cited a system serving a Dunkin' Donuts and Dollar General in Folsom. The Amphidrome system serves both sites, and that all the Commission's pilot program systems are scalable. It would not be a residential pilot program septic system; it would be a commercial unit.

Commissioner Avery asked if this is an area where the state owns a particularly wide right-of-way. Mr. Lanute said yes and pointed to the top left corner outside the RDA and owned by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (DOT). The Commissioner commented that there are often access issues around the Red Lion Diner, and Ms. Grogan said this is one of the improvements considered in the plan.

Chair Matos asked for a motion to recommend the ordinance to the full Commission in August. Commissioner Lohbauer made the motion. Commissioner Irick seconded. All Commissioners voted in favor.

4. Review of Forestry Policy Proposals to be Submitted to the Forest Stewardship Task Force

Commissioner Lohbauer recused himself from the discussion, citing his participation on the NJ Forest Stewardship Task Force, and was placed in the virtual waiting room.

Commission Environmental Specialist Branwen Ellis gave a presentation on the NJ Forest Stewardship Task Force (attached). The task force draws together participants from government agencies, interest groups, and private citizens and was formed by Senator Bob Smith. The entity's goal is to study and identify the ways the state can best manage its forest resources to combat climate change, prevent forest fires, improve ecosystems, and protect soil and water quality.

Ms. Ellis shared slides providing additional background on the task force. The first meeting was held in late April with over 200 participants and resulted in the formation of three work groups: climate workgroup, ecological health workgroup, and forestry legislation workgroup. The Commission staff is participating in all three work groups, and meetings began in June and July. Ms. Ellis noted the forestry legislation group was formed to give participants a more well-rounded background on forestry regulation in New Jersey so that they can make more sensible proposals to Senator Smith. She added that the Commission is in a good position relative to other participants in the task force, thanks to its established forestry management practices.

Ms. Ellis said 62 proposals have been submitted to the task force as of July 5, with the submission period open through August 31. She mentioned that the Commission can put forth its own proposals if it decides. The climate work group has reviewed four proposals to date, primarily centered around funding. The ecological health work group is concerned about analyzing forestry management and reducing the deer population.

Ms. Ellis said the Commission had a Forest Advisory Committee in the early 1990s. Ms. Grogan added that the committee is occasionally reactivated whenever the Commission reassesses its rules. Ms. Ellis said there was a proposal to create a similar committee on a regional basis.

She shared another slide further clarifying the goals of the task force. The task force is seeking a consensus on forestry policy so that Senator Smith can draft new legislation that would apply

statewide. The area of concern includes the Pinelands, Highlands, and all state owned forest in New Jersey. She concluded by saying the Commission can determine whether it wants to send its own rules as a model for forestry policy to the task force and Senator Smith.

Ms. Grogan asked if a voting process had been suggested to determine which proposals to send to Senator Smith. Ms. Ellis said yes, but that it has not been completely defined yet. There are both private individuals and large groups like the Sierra Club represented on the task force, and a fair voting process that reflects all interests evenly has not been devised yet.

Commissioner Avery asked if the task force is trying to promote a single set of stewardship rules across the state or if they will make a distinction between the oak/pine forests in the Pinelands and the hardwood forests of northern New Jersey.

Ms. Ellis said no, and that the task force is largely concerned with clearing and cutting down trees and not necessarily forest types. It is a debate between those who are pro-forestation and those who may be interested in forested lands for other purposes.

Commissioner Avery asked if this was only applicable to state-owned lands or public lands. Ms. Ellis confirmed that it only applies to state-owned land. She added that a county representative in the workgroup meetings expressed concern that state policies would trickle down to the county and municipal level.

Commissioner Irick asked if any consideration was given to insect management in state forests. Ms. Ellis said that invasive species management has been high on the priority list, especially the Spotted Lanternfly and Southern Pine Beetle. There was a proposal for a task force to address invasive animal and plant species on state-owned lands.

Commissioner Irick said that deer are a real problem in the farm community, and some state laws prohibit culling of deer on state-owned lands. The New Jersey Farm Bureau has promoted more consumption of deer meat, but the state lacks the necessary slaughter facilities. The farm community would like to see greater control of the deer population and a stronger market for deer meat.

Ms. Grogan asked if there were any members of the Farm Bureau or agricultural community represented in the task force.

Ms. Ellis said she would have to look, but that there was a specific statement advocating for the culling of deer and growing the market for deer meat in New Jersey. One of the suggestions for funding was to add an additional dollar per driver on their insurance policy for deer accidents to promote deer reduction and/or forest conservation.

Chair Matos asked if there was any timeframe for the task force to provide recommendations to Senator Smith.

Ms. Ellis said she did not know, but that they are under strict time constraints. She said she would reach out to the task force for more information.

Commissioner Avery asked if the task force's inception had any relation to the prescribed burning bill.

Ms. Grogan said that bill was a few years ago, and that more recently there have been several forestry related legislative proposals.

Chair Matos added that there were several proposals, and that Senator Smith decided to take a more holistic approach.

Charles Horner, Director of Regulatory Programs, reviewed the Commission's existing forestry rules. He noted staff would be submitting suggestions to the task force on behalf of the Commission.

Mr. Horner shared a slideshow on the Pinelands Protection Act (attached). He clarified that today's discussion is focused only on state-owned public lands. He described the difference between the Preservation Area and the Protection Area in the Pinelands Act.

He presented additional slides detailing the goals of the Act with respect to both the Protection Area and the Preservation Area, emphasizing points that are most relevant to forestry management.

The Commission's current forestry policy on both private and public lands in the Pinelands Area is described in the CMP. Forestry is permitted throughout the Pinelands, whether the land is in public or private ownership. The CMP contains many prescriptions on forestry, ranging from endangered species to clear cutting.

Mr. Horner shared a slide of forestry recommendations from Commission staff. He said staff attempted to identify appropriate policies for the P&I Committee to consider what type of forestry should occur on state-owned lands. He expanded on some of the points on the slide, including allowing up to five acres to be cleared to create habitats for threatened and endangered (T&E) species.

Additionally, debate is ongoing whether tree clearing to prevent and control wildfires can be called forestry. Mr. Horner continued that there are several prescriptions for prescribed burning and that the Commission is not attempting to endorse any method.

Commissioner Irick said the Commission has received piecemeal information on prescribed burns and that it does not seem like there is a clear plan of action when applications are presented. He asked if there was any way the Commission could pursue development of a master plan for prescribed burns in the State Forests.

Mr. Horner said the Commission has been advocating for a comprehensive prescribed burn and forest fire fuel break plan since its inception. He said the Commission and the NJDEP would likely agree that this is a desirable goal. It has proven difficult in practice for the Commission to receive those plans from the NJDEP. Mr. Horner noted the Forest Stewardship Task Force received a suggestion to create an inventory of fire breaks.

Commissioner Irick asked if the staff is aware of where all the fire lanes are in the Pinelands Area. Mr. Horner said no. Commissioner Irick said the staff should determine where they are so that they can properly review applications.

Commissioner Avery noted stewardship of Atlantic white cedar sometimes necessitates herbicide use and asked if this would be allowed under the recommended forestry policies.

Mr. Horner said he thinks Commission staff would recommend that herbicides essential to restoring Pinelands species would be permissible in this instance. He added that it is not necessarily within the Commission's jurisdiction.

Commissioner Avery mentioned the prohibition on herbicides in the slideshow and pointed to a state restoration project in Double Trouble State Park that generated marginal success.

Chair Matos asked how the recommendations outlined in the slideshow would align with what representatives from other parts of the state would be looking for.

Mr. Horner suggested the Commission should proceed with recommending its own forestry policies in the Pinelands to the task force. Whether or not the task force proceeds with the forestry policies submitted by the Commission in other areas of the state is ultimately its own prerogative.

Commissioner Irick asked if the task force has discussed off-road vehicle (ORV) damage on state-owned lands.

Ms. Ellis said that it has not come up yet, but that the task force has not reviewed the full 62 proposals and she anticipates the issue will surface.

Ms. Grogan asked if the committees are reviewing every proposal that is submitted.

Ms. Ellis said yes, and that the task force has only been moving at a rate of two proposals per meeting. She added that the NJDEP has a 14-step forestry process for areas outside of the Pinelands National Reserve that takes stakeholder interest into account. She also thanked Mr. Leakan for assisting in her presentation.

Commissioner Avery asked if any other agencies have the same authority over state-owned land that the Pinelands Commission can exercise in the Pinelands, such as the Highlands Council.

Ms. Ellis said she is not sure if that applies to the Highlands Council, or if the Highlands Council has adopted similar forestry policies from the Commission.

Commissioner Avery asked if the NJDEP needs approval to perform forestry activities in the Council's area of responsibility.

Ms. Grogan said she does not know the specific process, but it is likely the Council is involved in reviewing forestry proposals.

Ms. Ellis added that the NJDEP would likely still have to move through the 14-step process to perform forestry in the Highlands region.

Commissioner Avery asked if there have ever been any proposals by the NJDEP to log any of the Pinelands.

Mr. Horner said yes, although there are some distinctions. The Commission has received proposals from the NJDEP to contract a commercial harvester who can log in the Pinelands Area.

Ms. Grogan said all Commissioners present at the meeting are encouraged to think about the Forestry Stewardship Task Force materials, as the topic will appear again at the August meeting.

5. Continued Discussion of FY23 P&I Committee work plan

Ms. Grogan briefly reviewed the FY23 work plan that was presented at length in June. She talked about the discussion points from the last meeting and said there are very few tasks on the list that she views as optional or discretionary. Many of them are submitted to the Commission as ordinances and the agency is obligated to review them.

The CMP amendments are technically optional, and the Commission is not necessarily obligated to adopt them. She did not recommend removing any of the CMP amendments from the work plan. The Commission is monitoring the rulemaking activities of other agencies, including the NJDEP Protecting Against Climate Threat (PACT) rules, NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU) Solar Act Rules, and State Agricultural Development Committee (SADC) Soil Disturbance Rules. She also mentioned Memoranda of Agreement (or MOAs), saying they are technically discretionary but address important concerns to counties and municipalities.

She shared a slide on other projects and initiatives, touching on Pinelands Conservation Fund (PCF) acquisitions, the Forest Stewardship Task Force, and all-terrain vehicle (ATV) damage in Wharton State Forest. She also said Commissioner Avery's "unanticipated" category should be included on the slide. She made no changes from the content of the slides since June. The work plan will be presented at the next Personnel and Budget Committee meeting in August.

Chair Matos said the list was incredible and said the list items should be prioritized for the work plan and the budget. It is not possible to work on all items at the same time and unanticipated projects can arise quickly.

Ms. Grogan noted that priorities can change throughout the year and Chair Matos added therefore some tasks do not get completed in their original timeframe.

Commissioner Irick asked which type of applications consume the most of Commission staff time. He mentioned Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) and asked if it would be possible to hire a consultant to review those applications and then charge the applicant for those fees.

Ms. Grogan said yes, the CMP allows staff to determine where an escrow payment may be required for review of a complicated issue or application. She said the Commission is waiting for the NJDEP to put out new climate change related rules that should include HDD standards. This will inform the Commission's decision-making process on regulating HDD.

Commissioner Irick said some consultants may know more about HDD than the NJDEP, and that the Commission could automatically pass those off to a consultant and charge the applicant.

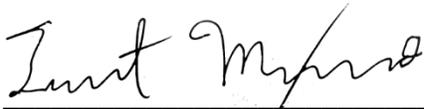
Mr. Horner said he and Ms. Grogan have been discussing how to prioritize staff time recently. By far, Commission staff receives more applications for single-family dwellings in the Pinelands Area than anything else. Staff spends a significant amount of time explaining zoning laws in New Jersey and Commission regulations to private landowners. Letters then need to be drafted and sent to explain the Commission's guidance and decisions. Mr. Horner said this is not meant to diminish HDD, solar facilities, landfill closures, or groundwater quality issues that Commission staff often handles.

6. Public Comment

No public comment was received at the meeting.

Chair Matos closed public comment at 11:16 am and asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Avery made the motion. Commissioner Irick seconded. All Commissioners voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 11:16 am.

Certified as true and correct:



Trent Maxwell, Planning Technical Assistant

Date: August 10, 2022

Pemberton Township

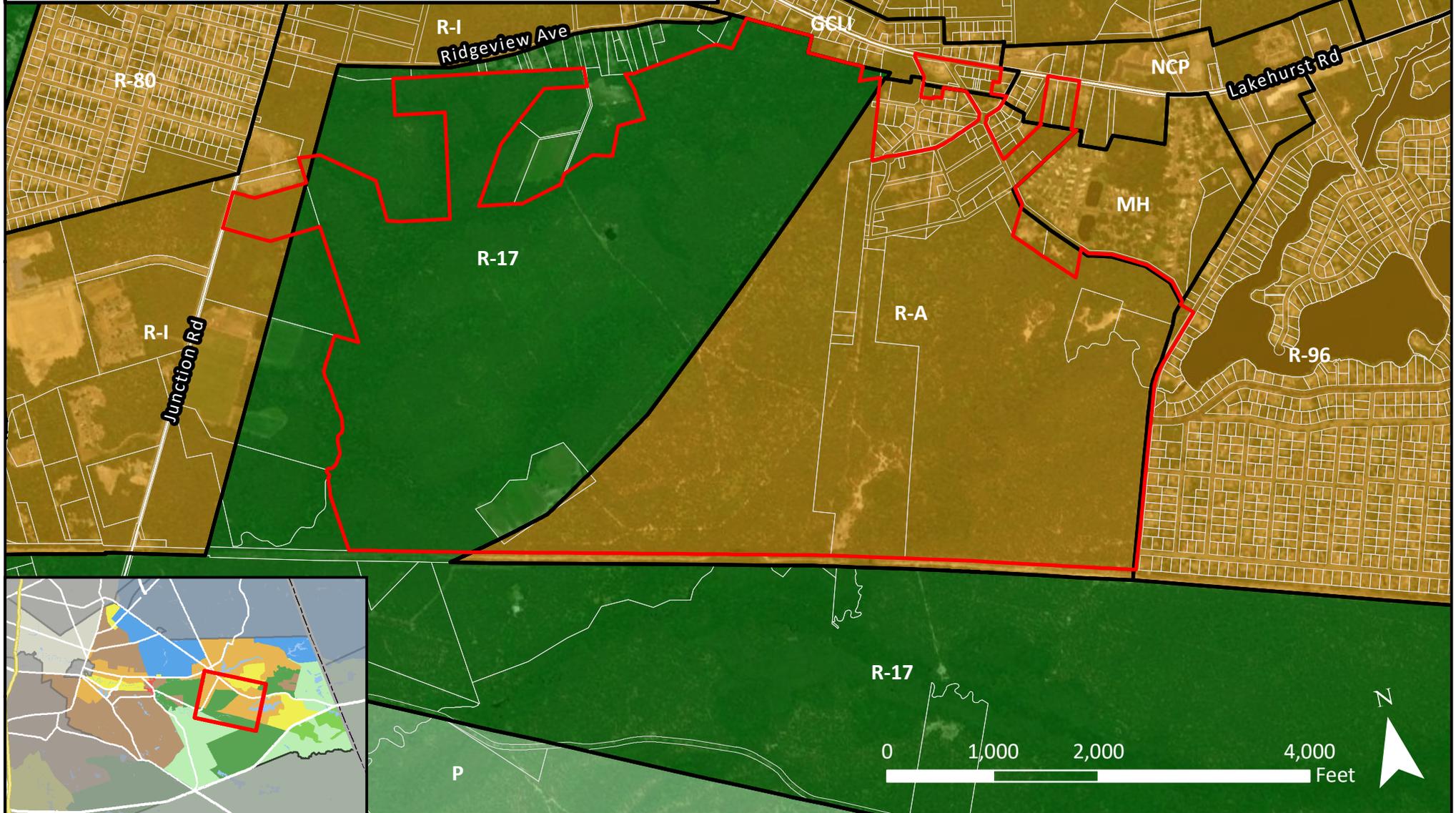
Lakehurst Road Redevelopment Plan - Existing Zoning

Pinelands Management Area

- Preservation Area District
- Forest Area
- Regional Growth Area
- Rural Development Area

- Redevelopment Area
- Existing Zoning
- Pemberton Twp Parcels

Executive Director's Report
Pemberton Twp. Ord. 11-2022
Exhibit 1
7/29/2022

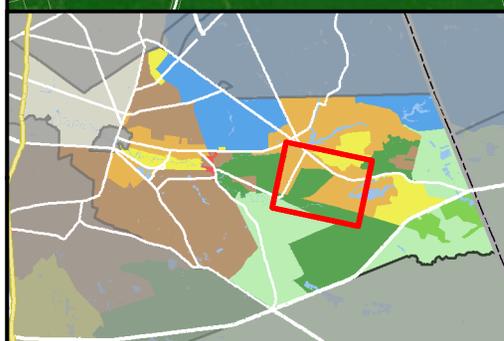
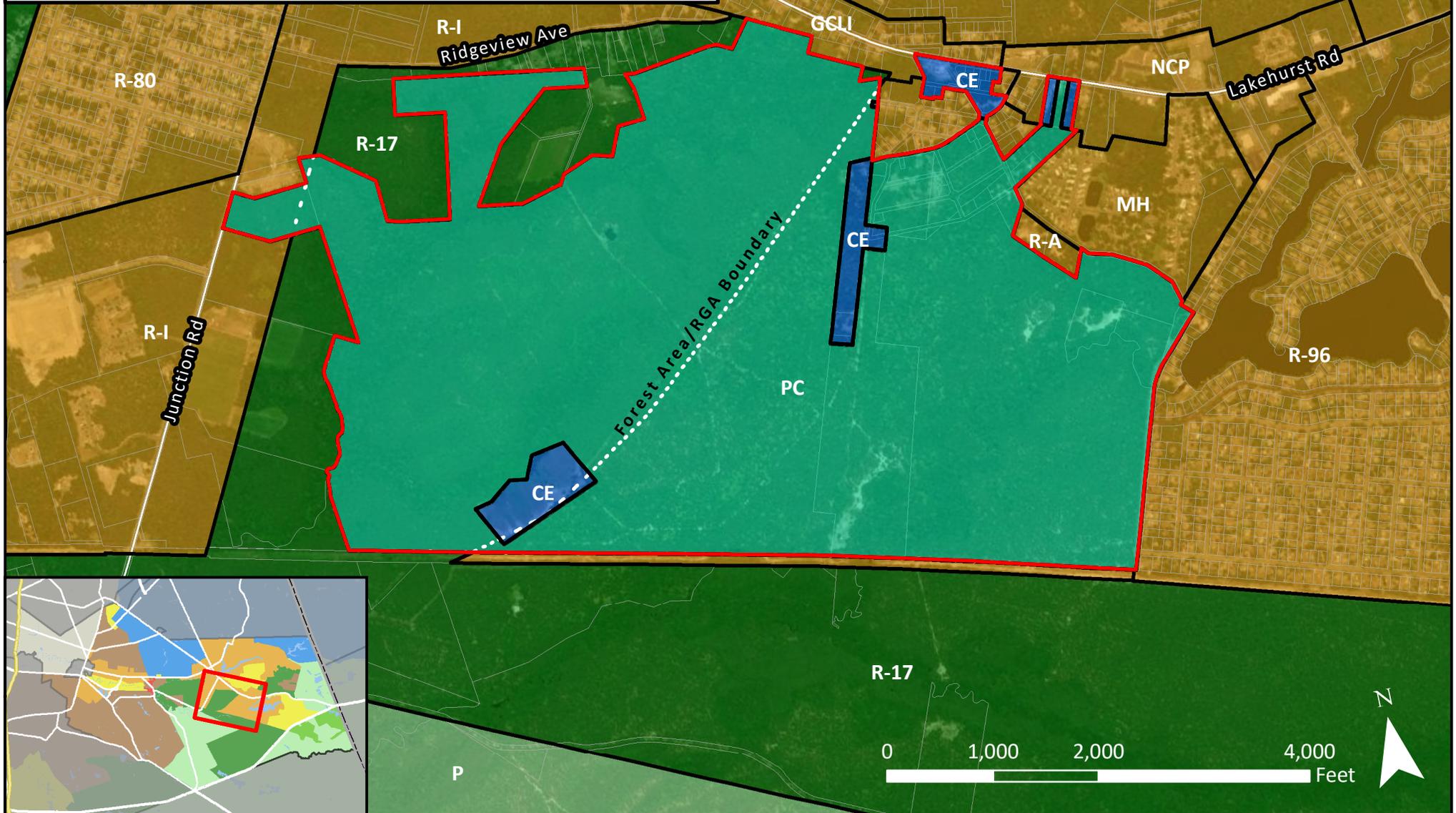


Pemberton Township

Lakehurst Road Redevelopment Plan - Proposed Zoning

Executive Director's Report
Pemberton Twp. Ord. 11-2022
Exhibit 2
7/29/2022

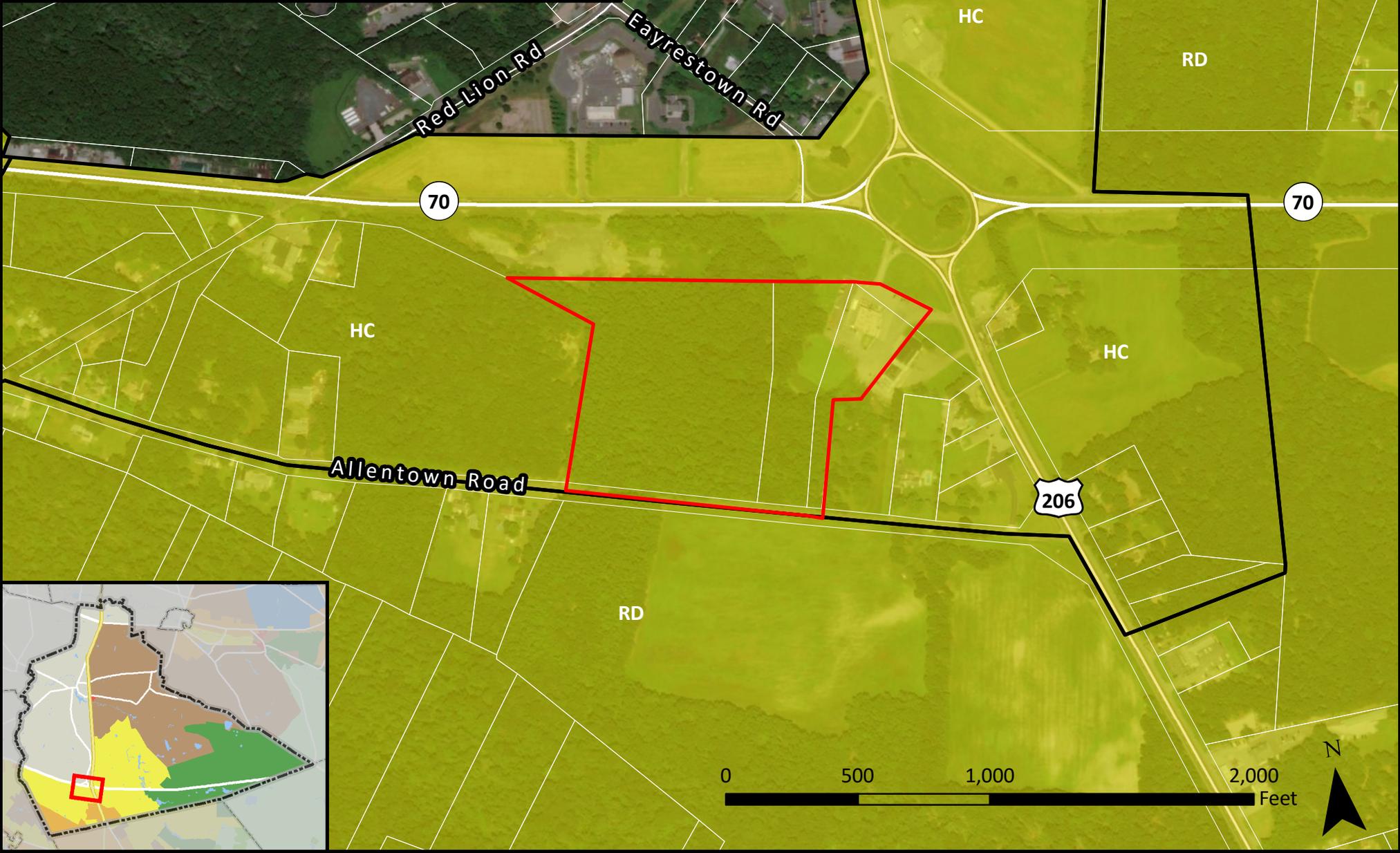
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|---|--|
| Pinelands Management Area |  Redevelopment Area |
|  Preservation Area District |  Community Extension Zone |
|  Forest Area |  Planned Community Zone |
|  Regional Growth Area |  Existing Zoning |
|  Rural Development Area |  Pemberton Twp Parcels |



Southampton Township Red Lion Diner Redevelopment Plan

Executive Director's Report
Southampton Twp Ord. 2022-05
Exhibit 1
7/29/2022

-  Pinelands Management Area
 -  Redevelopment Area
 -  Existing Zoning
 -  Lots
- Rural Development Area





NJ FOREST STEWARDSHIP TASK FORCE

**Branwen Ellis,
Environmental Specialist
July 29, 2022**

Belleplain State Forest

A photograph of a forest floor. In the foreground, several bright green ferns are in focus. The background shows several dark tree trunks and a forest floor covered in brown pine needles and fallen leaves. The lighting is natural, suggesting a sunny day in a wooded area.

SENATOR BOB SMITH

- The NJ Forest Stewardship Task Force was formed by NJ Senator Smith to study and identify ways in which the State can best manage its forests in order to fight climate change, prevent forest fires, improve ecosystems and protect soil and water quality.

**WHAT
SHOULD
STATE
FORESTS
LOOK LIKE?**

**TASK FORCE TO DEBATE AND
COME TO CONSENSUS OR
NON-CONSENSUS ON MAJOR
TOPICS**

Topics include passive vs. active management, herbicides, invasive species, carbon sequestration, climate change, landscape diversity to support wildlife populations

PARTICIPANTS

Private forestry Consultants, private citizens, Non-governmental organizations, County and State representatives

FEASIBILITY

Cost to implement proposals on State owned land and how to fund them.



Brendan Byrne
State Forest

THE TASK FORCE

KICK OFF MEETING

April 28, 2022, via Zoom.
There were over 200
participants on the call

SUBGROUPS FORMED

Climate Workgroup
Ecological Health Workgroup
Forestry Legislation Workgroup

TASK FORCE CO-CHAIRS

Andy Bennett, Board Member, NJ Forestry Association

Anjuli Ramos, Chapter Director, NJ Sierra Club

Eileen Murphy, PhD, Vice-President, Government relations, NJ
Audubon

Tom Gilbert, Co-Executive Director, NJ Conservation Foundation

**ZOOM WORKGROUP
MEETINGS HELD**

June 6 & 7, 2022

June 20 & 21, 2022

July 11 & 12, 2022

July 25 & 26, 2022



PROPOSALS

**Atsion Lake in
Wharton State Forest**

CLIMATE WORKGROUP

Proposals include raising money to increase carbon sequestration, forest conservation for water purification

ECOLOGICAL HEALTH WORKGROUP

Proposals include allocating funds for monitoring/analysis of forestry management techniques on NJ's water supply and quality, reducing the deer population and establishing regional group to coordinate Invasive species management.

NJ TASK FORCE GOALS

To provide clear, concise proposals on how the State can best manage publicly owned forests across the Garden State.

Double Trouble State Park

