



State of New Jersey  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
NEW JERSEY STATE PLANNING COMMISSION  
P.O. Box 820  
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625-0820

PHILIP D. MURPHY  
*Governor*

THOMAS K. WRIGHT  
*Chairman*

SHEILA Y. OLIVER  
*LT. GOVERNOR*

DONNA A. RENDEIRO  
*Executive Director/Secretary*

**New Jersey State Planning Commission  
Minutes of the Meeting Held on July 5, 2023  
Zoom Video Conference**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chairman Wright called the July 5, 2023 video conference of the New Jersey State Planning Commission (SPC) to order at 9:32 a.m.

**OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT**

It was announced that notice of the date, time, and place of the meeting had been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present**

Nick Angarone, Designee for Shawn LaTourette, Department of Environmental Protection  
Joe Atchison III, Assistant Secretary, Department of Agriculture  
Danielle Esser, Director of Governance, NJ Economic Development Authority  
Frank Gaffney, Designee for President Fiordaliso, Board of Public Utilities  
Bruce Harris, Municipal member  
Keith Henderson, Designee for Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver, Commissioner, Department of Community Affairs  
Edward J. McKenna, Vice Chair, Public Member  
County Commissioner Director Shanel Robinson, County Member  
Stephen Santola, Public Member  
Julia Somers, Public Member  
Andy Swords, Designee for Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, Commissioner, Department of Transportation  
Thomas Wright, Chairman

**Others Present through Video conference**

See Attachment A

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairman Wright asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve the minutes of June 7, 2023. Bruce Harris made the motion, and Julia Somers seconded it. With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright a roll call vote: Ayes: (9) Danielle Esser, Frank Gaffney, Andy Swords, Bruce Harris, Vice Chair McKenna, Commissioner Shanel Robinson, Stephen Santola, Julia Somers, Thomas Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (3) Joe Atchison, Nick Angarone, Keith Henderson. The June 7, 2023 minutes were approved.

## **CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

Chairman Wright said that about a week and a half ago, he joined several other commissioners at the New Jersey APA conference for a terrific panel discussion around the next State Plan. He thanked the New Jersey APA, New Jersey Future, Donna and the Office of Planning Advocacy for helping put that together and all the other Commissioners who joined me. We all found it to be a very educational and helpful experience. He was pleased at the consensus among all of the speakers, and the depth of experience that New Jersey has. One of the things that people sometime miss is that there's a community that has been on this path now for decades that really knows what they're talking about and has a great amount of experience. He was heartened and encouraged by that conversation and hope other commissioners were. This will dovetail neatly into Donna's presentation this morning about undertaking a new State Plan which we are excited about.

Chairman Wright referred to the Director for a report.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

We received notice that the Town of Dover received a \$50,000 T-Mobile Grant for trail development and enhancement. We submitted a letter of support for the project. The grant will improve pedestrian safety and provide a safe outdoor recreational amenity for Dover residents and visitors.

Transition activities continue with all staff. Postings for 3 open positions closed on July 2<sup>nd</sup> and we're awaiting the results from Human Resources.

Director Rendeiro said that at the last meeting, Vice Chair McKenna suggested that we do a resolution for Barry Ableman who is retiring because of his length of service here. She has asked him to come back to the August meeting so that we can give him a proper send-off. In the meantime, once Barry and Megan leave, we will have two planners for the state.

Later in today's agenda, I will present the proposed timeline for the update to the State Plan. I will not be asking for action today; rather I will present a proposal for discussion. I will ask for action at the August meeting, once I incorporate any guidance from the Commission.

As a quick update:

- The timeline was finalized but it is a "living document" that will be updated regularly as there are many moving parts and unknown and it is a very aggressive timeline. The timeline includes the mapping discussion.

- A communications was developed to ensure that all stakeholders have a chance to provide input prior to the publication of the preliminary draft. Communications efforts with the county planners and preliminary informational meetings with counties that request one, the provision of a unique email address so that members of the public can provide comments. Stakeholder sessions are being planned by topic.
- We have received responses from 8 of the 21 counties to our request for information for the State Plan update.
- Attendance was high in the State Plan listening session at the NJ Planning and Redevelopment Conference.
- Phase I of the Infrastructure Needs Assessment is underway. Discussions have begun with Rutgers regarding Phase II of the Infrastructure Needs Assessment.
- A meeting is scheduled to determine if Rowan can participate in mapping efforts for the update.
- Activities are ready for the staff to get involved for discussions.

Since the June 7 SPC meeting:

- Stone Harbor and Wildwood Crest were approved by the PIC to move forward to be presented today for endorsement.
- Work has begun on the recommendation for endorsement for Bedminster.
- Staff worked on Ocean Township's Opportunities and Constraints Report and their waiver request.
- The Office received DEP's portion of the Seaside Heights Opportunity and Constraints Report and DOT's Opportunities and Constraints Report for Ocean City.
- Little Egg Harbor's visioning workshop is scheduled for July 11.
- Berkeley held their first visioning session. Public comments were primarily positive regarding the open space and recreation work that the Township has been completed. Traffic along Route 9 was a major issue with everyone in attendance and almost every discussion led back to the traffic along Route 9. Many of the public did not want anything to happen until the congestion issues are resolved. The County Planner attended and spoke a little about the county projects that are occurring.
- Newton's prepetition meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 12.

The PIC approved Lakewood's request for a map amendment will be presented later in today's meeting.

The follow-up for the coastal cohort of the FEMA Resilience Accelerator continues with a Zoom call with Little Egg Harbor, Ocean City, and Pennsville, scheduled for July 13. There will be an in-person follow-up with Maurice River and Commercial Township in September. Met with Maurice River Township's Resilience Team and facilitated the development of a draft Resilience strategy.

The site visit in Dover with NJ Transit, town officials, and the redeveloper to discuss the transit-oriented development remains on schedule for July 10.

Staff submitted the SPC-approved proposed Rules to the NJ Register Notice for publication on July 17; a 60-day public comment period begins upon publication.

As a follow-up to the warehouse siting guidance, staff prepared model ordinance language. We met with Deputy Attorney General regarding model warehouse ordinance language. Feedback is expected shortly. Additionally, staff met with the Business Advocates and a warehouse developer and provided input regarding a warehouse development in Frenchtown. Additionally, Delanco Township rezoned a large portion of its industrial area based on the warehouse guidance.

Staff participated in a Rutgers-facilitated meeting regarding the expansion of MOD IV data for other uses. MOD IV is the standardized system for tax assessors to manage their tax base. Topics under discussion include flood plains and zoning. It was determined that this information is valuable, but MOD IV is not the best vehicle by which to maintain statewide data because this data is not within a tax assessor's responsibilities. Discussions will continue on both of these topics.

Staff attended New Jersey's fifth Internet for All Public Outreach meeting. Topics discussed were the Broadband, Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD), from which New Jersey will be receiving \$4.92 million to fund various activities; and the Digital Equity Act, from which New Jersey will be receiving \$1.17 million. Version 2 of the National Broadband Map was also revealed.

Staff participated in a site visit in Westfield. Their plans consist of an adaptive reuse project converting 7.3 acres of vacant retail space (former Lord & Taylor site) and 2 acres of municipal land, currently being utilized as parking areas, into a mixed-use, live-work-play community located within a transit-oriented development.

An introductory meeting is scheduled for July 11 with the New Jersey Turnpike Authority.

DVRPC's Board approved the recommendations from the scoring committee for New Jersey's Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI) grant application deadline was April 28. The Executive Director is on the review committee for those applications. DVRPC received 10 applications totaling \$1,030,000. All four counties in the DVRPC region were represented, however, only \$600,000 is available.

We participated in the DVRPC's Financial Planning subcommittee where we voted on project evaluation criteria for their Transportation Improvement Plan for their upcoming update to the 2050 Connections Plan.

The Office participated in a call with the Business Action Center and the Highlands Council to ensure coordination of efforts. Staff assisted the Department of Environmental Protection's Community Health Initiative with technical assistance regarding how a document would be best suited for municipal benefit.

Staff participated in the Southern Barnegat Bay Watershed Planning meeting. Staff attended South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization's Maurice River Study kick-off meeting with Baker International.

The Executive Director was invited to speak at the League of Municipalities Educational Foundation's inaugural Climate Resilience Roundtable at a session on sustainable development and infrastructure and smart growth initiatives. Originally scheduled for June, the session was postponed until late summer due to scheduling conflicts.

Chairman Wright thanked Director Rendeiro for her report.

Chairman Wright asked for questions or comments from the Commission members.

Without any questions or comments from the Commission members, Chairman Wright referred Director Rendeiro to new business.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Map Amendment for Lakewood Township**

Director Rendeiro referred the presentation to Barry Ableman.

This presentation can be found at:

<https://nj.gov/state/planning/assets/docs/meeting-materials/spc/materials/2023-0705/spc-material-2023-0705-lakewood-Biennial-Review-and-Map-Amendments-Memo-to-DR.pdf>

Director Rendeiro said that as Barry mentioned Lakewood did request three amendments. The third one, there were a number of environmental features that we did not feel were appropriate to add so we did not make that

recommendation. The other two make sense from what they're planning on doing and what the environment around it is so we do recommend these two, not the third one.

Chairman Wright asked if there was someone from Lakewood. Barry responded that because of a time conflict, they were not able to attend.

Director Rendeiro said that they were at the PIC meeting and understand why we did the recommendation for two and not the third.

### **RESOLUTION 2023-12- Resolution Map Amendment for Lakewood Township**

Director Rendeiro read the resolution.

The Resolution can be found at:

<https://nj.gov/state/planning/assets/docs/meeting-materials/spc/resolutions/certified-resolution-2023-12.pdf>

With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2023-12. The motion was made by Vice Chair McKenna and seconded by Stephen Santola. Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote. Ayes: (12) Danielle Esser, Frank Gaffney, Joe Atchison, Andy Swords, Bruce Harris, Nick Angarone, Vice Chair McKenna, Keith Henderson, Shanel Robinson, Stephen Santola, Julia Somers, Chairman Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (0). Resolution 2023-12 was approved.

### **Plan Endorsement of the Borough of Stone Harbor**

Director Rendeiro referred the presentation to Meghan Wren.

This presentation can be found at:

<https://nj.gov/state/planning/assets/docs/meeting-materials/spc/materials/2023-0705/spc-material-2023-0705-stone-hsrbor-Recomendation-Report-PIC-5-24-23.pdf>

Paul Kates, the planner from Stone Harbor said that he wants to thank Meghan for helping us through the process. As she stated, Stone Harbor has always made the attempt to stay at the front of flood mitigation and sustainability and we look forward to continuing to work with the state on those two fronts. Thank you.

Director Rendeiro said that we truly understand DEP's concern about the piece that's in the lagoon. The reason I thought it was okay to bring this forward is in recognition of what they are doing to mitigate. They are changing ordinances to really discourage residential in that area. It is their commercial core and they're doing a number of mitigation factors. In looking at the whole picture, I think it makes sense to include those pieces.

Director Rendeiro asked for questions or comments from the Commission members.

Commissioner Somers said that she is curious to know what it would take for the DEP's concerns to be mitigated.

Director responded by saying that DEP would just like that area not to be included in the center.

Nick Angarone, designee for Shawn LaTourette, Department of Environmental Protection said that the area's waterside of third and waterside of 96th and some areas between 96th and 95<sup>th</sup> show is being inundated by sea level rise at two and three feet, which is within the lifespan of certainly any new development and generally don't support the designation of a center in those types of areas. It's also within the 1% floodplain and so is the entire town. Other than that, we are extremely happy to see all of the various actions around resilience and smart growth that the township has undertaken. For this limited issue, we would have supported the endorsement.

Commissioner Somers said that she is just curious to know why the town is so insistent on moving forward with this.

Director Rendeiro said that it's in their commercial corridor and it's the area that has their largest economic opportunity. The ordinances are encouraging higher bulkheads and discouraging residential in those areas. We do understand that there is risk there but if it's commercial as opposed to residential, we think that risk can be managed.

Mr. Kates said that with the Borough's planning initiatives and many of their design requirements, new construction is much more resilient and much more flood resistant. Any new construction, commercial or residential, if they're in an area where the street elevation is below six and a half, or now in our overlay zone, they're required to raise the entire lot up to that six and a half at the foundation of any structures. We're trying to build up, not just the structures out of the floodplain, but lift the surrounding land. The idea of going forward that isn't in the next 50 to 100 years is if enough of these properties get redeveloped, we could ultimately raise road elevations without negatively impacting properties. We are looking at that two feet of sea level rise is kind of the foundation where now we're seeing sunny day flooding in that four to four and a half range. If we raise elevations up above six and a half, we can mitigate a lot of the nuisance flooding going forward. We're open to any other suggestions as well. Stone Harbor is also in a fortunate position that the cost of the projects can absorb the cost of additional flood mitigation and sustainable action. As stated, we see it as an area where it could be redeveloped. There are commercial developers that have been picking off the residences and converting them to businesses. As Meghan said, the Reeds have their eye on one of the homes adjacent to theirs as an area for redevelopment that they'd like to bring into their business model and their holdings.

Commissioner Somers said that she is from the highlands so I'm not familiar with your shore issues. It does seem to me that when we raise and harden the landscape going forward, we're probably just pushing the problems on elsewhere. That is certainly something that I would be concerned about. I commend Stone Harbor for all the things you've done. It's really impressive but I'm worried that there's not much we can do about it and probably time is going to prove DEP is right.

Director Rendeiro said that I don't disagree with that. I believe that we have an issue that we need to deal with but at the same time, we do need to recognize that there's a \$40 billion tourism industry on the shore that we're trying to at least allow some of that to happen. It's a bit of a balancing act, so it's not an easy call. I absolutely understand DEP's concern and it's not an easy call, but how do you ensure that we keep the economics alive for as long as we can but try to balance those differences? That's really where we're coming from.

Commissioner Esser asked can the Township or one of the planners talk a little bit more about some of the mitigation measures that helped make the consideration more palatable.

Nick Angarone said that we're talking about Stone Harbor but it applies to every town that we look at. The town is doing great work and everything they're doing here around resilience we generally support. The question here for us, is these areas that we're identifying as centers/smart growth areas are areas that the state believes are appropriate for additional growth and incentivization of growth there. We're not saying that nothing should be there. We're not saying that the economy can't happen there, that economic development or development can't happen there. We're not saying that we have to retreat here. We do not believe it appropriate for the state to identify these areas for further incentivization.

Mr. Kates said the two main things that we're doing to mitigate flooding on new development and new properties is we've now required bulkheads to be replaced up to eight feet on any new construction or substantially approved. In addition, they're required to back the bulkhead up with soil, so they're required to backfill the bulkhead within six inches of the top of the bulkhead. Additionally, if they're in those low-lying areas, which is essentially the entire Bayfront, they're required to build retaining walls along the property line up to a minimum elevation of six, and minimum elevation at the structure of six and a half. That doesn't just apply to residential. It also applies to

commercial development, with exceptions for driveways, and obviously access. We're currently adopting the new flood standards which add another foot of freeboard so we'll be up at three feet of freeboard. Incentivizing the redevelopment of these areas, we see it as pulling that existing floodplain from structures up out of the floodplain, giving them elevation, and bringing up the land around elements, which ultimately could allow Stone Harbor to raise roads.

Meghan Wren said that if you look at the map, the piece that the DEP does not want to include would exclude any waterfront or any water-based development in their downtown district. They haven't designated especially as what they would like to develop is water-based businesses along the lagoon area. It's following the basin on 96 and Third Avenue. They've identified that specifically as their revitalization area. I think that was part of the consideration and what we would leave the town with if we took that part out.

Nick Angarone said that again I want to clarify, not putting a center there would not exclude development means that the state would not incentivize development. There's a difference. If they came in for a permit, they'd likely be able to get a permit. Whether the state should incentivize development, is where we're coming at this.

Chairman Wright said I think this is an issue that, as we update the State Plan, we ought to be having a real serious conversation about what center designation means and how we want state agencies to use it. I have real respect, Nick, for DEP in the position that you're taking. I am planning to vote yes on this resolution because designation does not mean that everything within the boundaries of a center is meant to be developed. It is meant to function as a whole center. A well-functioning center is one that would include a diversity of uses and activities in it.

Chairman Wright said it's a question about what center designation really means and how it applies to individual parcels within a center. I think that one of the important things that I would maintain is that it doesn't necessarily mean that we don't try to actually zone every parcel within the center and say that every piece of it is appropriate for intense development. Rather, is this the designation, or is this the geographic area that the town considers its core, its area for growth but recognizes that there are different kinds of priorities for the parcels and properties within that area? There can and should be public parks within centers because parks are part of the land uses that we need to support growth within communities. I'm going to vote yes on this resolution because it seems to me that the uses along this area are important for the future of Stone Harbor and its economic development, not necessarily because I see that all these parcels ought to be intensely developed. I think that ought to be worked out through a planning process but they are part of the center. As Meghan just pointed out, they provide a vital contribution to that entire center.

Nick Angarone said that Mr. Chairman and I had similar comments a couple of years ago when we were talking about Millstone Borough. I think you're coming at it strictly from a good planning approach, which I don't disagree with but because we tie incentives to this in New Jersey, it's not as simple as we'd like it to be as kind of good planning one on one kind of dictates. I understand your perspective and the State Plan, the town, and OPA but I do think recognizing what the designation actually means and what the potential results of it are important to consider when we're making these decisions.

Chairman Wright said that during the process of adopting and updating a State Plan, we should have a conversation about what kinds of incentives DEP does and how DEP uses this because I'd like to try and better understand that myself and see if we can work that out.

Commissioner Somers said that she really appreciates that you're suggesting that the designation process will be revisited and what that means during the state planning upcoming process. My question is, if I were a property owner there, could I get insurance after I rebuild, or build in these areas?

Mr. Kates responded by saying that to his knowledge, no one that is rebuilding in the area has had an issue getting insurance.

Director Rendeiro said that I think they would get insurance. The question is how much it would cost. I think this is a really important topic, probably one of the most important topics to cover when we do start talking about policies on updating the Plan. It was a very different world in 2001, so what happens in the center, how a center is defined, should be absolutely looked at differently than it was in 2001.

Commissioner Esser said that if the proposal was put forward the centers, are there any restrictions that would be acceptable to both the town and DEP to address any concerns?

Director Rendeiro said that the only thing that DEP would agree with is pulling those pieces out that are in question, I will call it the backward L on the map, that's in the lagoon was the only piece that is an issue. I don't know whether or not Stone Harbor would be able to agree with that.

Commissioner Esser asked if there are any sort of conditions that would be acceptable for development within the site or certain portions of the site.

Meghan Wren responded by saying that there are conditions already related to building in a floodplain and the additional ordinances that the City already has about the elevation. They already have more restrictions in those areas than other towns might have because they have a flood overlay zone and have additional freeboard requirements and additional bulkhead requirements.

Director Rendeiro said to keep in mind, they still have to comply with all of the DEP regulations that are there, particularly on any of the newer rules that they're implementing, and that all has to be incorporated. I believe they already have incorporated those requirements.

Mr. Kates agreed with Director Rendeiro.

Nick Angarone said that this is less of an issue with the communities' actions and more with what the State Planning Commission should or shouldn't do.

Mr. Kates said that from the Borough's standpoint, we're just trying to afford property owners and developers in that area the greatest opportunity for redevelopment by including those incentives that the center designation would allow.

Keith Henderson, Designee for the Department of Community Affairs said that the incentives are necessary in order to provide redevelopment of the properties in a manner that's consistent with what the DEP is looking for and what the local ordinances are. Without those incentives, then the redevelopment doesn't occur and the additional mitigation efforts don't happen. The nature of this particular area is that it's a water-based economic engine. Without that economic engine, the municipality can't continue to do some of the fine planning work that they've done, the redevelopment won't happen and the properties won't become better and safer. It's important to not lose track of that.

Without any questions or comments from the commission members, Chairman Wright referred to Director Rendeiro to read the resolution.

#### **RESOLUTION 2023-13- Resolution Adopting Plan Endorsement of the Borough of Stone Harbor**

Director Rendeiro read the resolution.

The Resolution can be found at:

<https://nj.gov/state/planning/assets/docs/meeting-materials/spc/resolutions/certified-resolution-2023-13.pdf>



With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2023-13. The motion was made by Vice Chair McKenna and seconded by Bruce Harris. Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote. Ayes: (10) Danielle Esser, Frank Gaffney, Joe Atchison, Andy Swords, Bruce Harris, Vice Chair McKenna, Keith Henderson, Shanel Robinson, Stephen Santola, Chairman Wright. Nays: (2) Nick Angarone, Julia Somers. Abstains: (0). Resolution 2023-13 was approved.

Commissioner Somers said that she wants to tell Stone Harbor I think all planning they're doing is absolutely fabulous. My vote is not a reflection on Stone Harbor. It does reflect that I welcome the coming discussion about what endorsement means because I think we've got to fix that.

Chairman Wright said thank you everyone for the discussion. An important part of the role of the State Planning Commission is to shed light on these complex policy issues.

### **Plan Endorsement of the Borough of Wildwood Crest**

Director Rendeiro referred the presentation to Meghan Wren.

This presentation can be found at:

<https://nj.gov/state/planning/assets/docs/meeting-materials/spc/materials/2023-0705/spc-material-2023-0705-wildwood-crest-Recommendation-Report-PIC-WWC-6-16-23.pdf>

Director Rendeiro said the small extension that we are looking to include in the center, as Meghan stated, previously there was a club there. It does still have the stub infrastructure there. As Meghan said, if we do not include it then it cannot be part of the discussion but it still has to go through a DEP permitting process. It may or may not get approved when they go through permitting. There are a number of issues that we would not be able to resolve until they went through the permitting process. This is sort of a catch-22, where if it's not in the center, they can't discuss it. We think it's important to keep it in primarily because of the goal of public access to the beach. I feel it's important to keep in here so they can continue the permitting discussions. I do think it enhances the ability of Wildwood Crest to have that public access. It's a lot more comfortable having full rest stops.

Constance Mahon, Borough Administrator, Wildwood Crest, said thank you to the Commission, especially Meghan for all of her hard work on our behalf. We are passionate about getting that fishing pier area back into the center. It was an oversight many years ago when Plan Endorsement was done as a regional approach by our county planning. We would love to get it back in and we do have plans while we're doing an Island wide beach re-nourishment and dune construction with the Army Corps of Engineers. We are planning on raising that entire pier to go over the dune so that we have coastal storm protection. When we do that, we would love to put back in bathrooms that were once there. We do still have the infrastructure there. As Donna mentioned, we have the stubs for the sewer that already exist. They have been capped but they are right there in that area. We would like to put bathrooms there for the convenience of our visitors. The next closest bathroom is about five to six blocks away but it's inland of the beach. This one would be closer and located on the beach for people to use. Our porta potties get a lot of criticism, and in high winds and storms can be slightly problematic so we are trying to eliminate as many as possible. We thank you for your consideration.

Chairman Wright asked for questions or comments from the Commission members.

Nick Angarone said that I just want to state where the Department's coming from here. The site in question is within a coastal high-hazard area and within a dune system and is not something that we would typically support for inclusion in a center or growth area. The question of whether it can be permitted seems to be somewhat complicated. We certainly don't want to go through those questions in a Plan Endorsement process. It's unclear to us at this time whether this is something that would be permissible, and so I'm not going to vote in favor or against it for this very small issue that is really a permitting question.

Director Rendeiro said she thinks we're very much in agreement that I don't think we could answer the permitting questions, nor is it appropriate for us to be answering the permitting questions. If that site is not in the center, those conversations will likely not happen so that's why we think it's important to put it in so at least those conversations can happen.

Commissioner Somers said that Stone Harbor, I felt it was a matter of choice. I actually don't see that as being a choice here. People are going to go there and I don't think the porta potties are a smart solution to the problem. I'm not addressing whether this is political. I obviously don't know that. I obviously defer to the DEP to do what is appropriate. I think this is a public health issue. My only concern would be that it only be possible to be used for public bathrooms that we're not getting mission creep, and there's suddenly all kinds of other things being built along that line. That absolutely should not happen.

Director Rendeiro said that that is a valid thought, which is why we cut the center off just at that site.

Chairman Wright said that it's not creating essentially a redevelopment site, on the sand dune or anything like that. We would not want this to be misinterpreted as opening that up for multifamily housing or something like that.

Commissioner Somers thinks it's a public health concern.

Nick Angarone said that I want to make sure that we're all understanding everything. So two points, the reason that we don't approve things and coastal high-hazard areas is that storms end up coming off and resulting in additional damage. Also, for what it's worth, the bathrooms don't have to be in this specific location to meet public access needs and meet health and safety needs. I'm largely responding to comments and not speaking to the specifics.

Without any questions or comments from the commission members, Chairman Wright referred to Director Rendeiro to read the resolution.

#### **RESOLUTION 2023-14- Resolution Adopting Plan Endorsement of the Borough of Wildwood Crest**

Director Rendeiro read the resolution.

The Resolution can be found at:

<https://nj.gov/state/planning/assets/docs/meeting-materials/spc/resolutions/certified-resolution-2023-14.pdf>

With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2023-14. The motion was made by Vice Chair McKenna and seconded by Keith Henderson. Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote. Ayes: (11) Danielle Esser, Frank Gaffney, Joe Atchison, Andy Swords, Bruce Harris, Vice Chair McKenna, Keith Henderson, Shanel Robinson, Stephen Santola, Julia Somers, Chairman Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (1) Nick Angarone. Resolution 2023-14 was approved.

#### **State Plan Update Discussion**

Director Rendeiro said that what she would like to present today is the process proposal. She is not going to be asking for any action today but will ask for action at the August meeting. The Director will present to you the proposed process. We can have a discussion and make any changes to the process that the Commission deems necessary and important. I wanted to talk a little bit about my thoughts. This is not a strategy discussion. There'll be plenty of opportunity to have strategies and discuss policies like we were just talking about moving forward. This is purely to talk about the process.

Director Rendeiro referred to the presentation.

This presentation can be found at:

<https://nj.gov/state/planning/assets/docs/meeting-materials/spc/materials/2023-0705/spc-material-2023-0705-State-Plan-Update.pptx>

Commissioner Esser said that I just want to commend you on the idea of adding more opportunity to public comment and involvement early on in the process as a way to make it a little smoother, and potentially alleviate any concerns and kind of address those upfront.

Commissioner Harris said that I think this is a great plan. In the original plan was anything special done to include the large cities in the planning process? I don't see anything in the schedule set out talking specifically for Newark or Jersey City. I'm wondering if working through the counties is the most effective way to get to the cities. I don't know how they relate to their counties or anything like that.

Director Rendeiro responded by saying that historically, there were identified seven urban centers that were sort of given permanent center status. Part of that was because if you're an urban center, you're going to get those benefits and you already are compact. There's not a whole lot that can change. Yes, I would engage the cities either through the counties or individually on their own. They are goal number one in what we're doing. My bigger concern is not so much the bigger cities like Newark, Trenton, and Atlantic City because they are going to get the attention. My concern is to the second ring suburbs that have the same issues as the larger urban centers, but that don't get as much attention. Those towns and cities are very important. I've had a conversation with Barbara George, who works with the urban mayors, and they're going to be one of our stakeholders.

Chairman Wright said that I'll just add to that, there was actually I can recall a special meeting of the Plan Development Committee where the city planning directors were invited in to give comments on the preliminary plan. The conversation quickly went to a kind of question about resources, and how much was the State Plan going to guide resources, and that was what the cities were most interested in. I suspect that that would be a common theme again this time, but I think, Bruce, that's a really good idea. I think it would be well worth us trying to do a special outreach, a special kind of dialogue with the leadership of the major urban centers in the state.

Andy Swords, Designee for the Department of Transportation said he really appreciates this really comprehensive presentation on the State Plan. I also appreciate your awareness of a lot of the pitfalls. I think going in that's going to help a lot in knowing what to look out for. That's really great. One question I had is I heard you say, I guess at a future meeting, there will be a vote, is that vote to just proceed with the planned activity? Or is there more to it that we need to be aware of?

Director Rendeiro responded by saying that no, it would be a vote to approve the process with an understanding that the dates are subject to change.

Andy Swords asked the Director if it would be possible to share today's presentation with the Commission members. Director Rendeiro agreed to share the presentation and to add it to the minutes and to the website as Chairman Wright suggested it.

Commissioner Somers said that congratulations on getting the county planners involved. I know Walter is there and I'm sure he completely agrees. I'm concerned, do you have enough staff?

Director Rendeiro responded that I have a really good staff of who is remaining. Hopefully, I'll be able to add a planner or two in the next couple of months. Jackie's been really good and helping us organize all of this. She really put together the timeline. I did send the timeline to the DAG to make sure we have the noticing pieces right. There were a few tweaks but overall aligned with the rules. The planners are going to be critical in terms of the input and the discussion on the planning topics. The answer is, I hope so and that's why the recruitment efforts are so important.

Commissioner Sommers said that it's good to have goals and I completely agree with you on that. The flexibility is going to prove to be essential. I have a couple of questions and an observation. I see that we just created a whole new area in New Jersey. Did we all know that there was a place called Central New Jersey, it's now going to be official? When you were talking about the different phases and maybe I missed this. I didn't see where it started resources and support for tourism by law.

Director Rendeiro said that I believe we could add that into phase two.

Commissioner Somers said that New Jersey has a robust tourism economy. We need to plan for that and the support and protection of our historic resources, as well as our environmental resources, is obviously key to the success of a tourism economy. Director Rendeiro said that tourism is not only the beach; it's agritourism, it's the mountains.

Commissioner Somers said you talked about mapping, and you talked about implementation. I also agree that that's where the challenges are going to be greatest. The ability to do mapping today is so much more sophisticated than it used to be but when you map, you create a line, and when you create a line, somebody's in and somebody's out. If you don't create a line, you create fuzziness, and then you end up in court, so that is going to be a challenging and tricky conversation. I hope that you will include me on the plan development committee.

Director Rendeiro said I'm not asking at this meeting but for folks that are non-ex-officio members, if you want to be on it, please let me know.

Commissioner Santola said that on the 21 meetings and the six meetings, are those quorum meetings, full meetings of the board? Or can they not be quorum meetings? How do you handle it?

Director Rendeiro responded by saying that those are public meetings, they're not Commission meetings. I will check with the DAG moving forward but they are going to be noticed, they are public meetings so they're not technically SPC meetings. The way the rules are written, it says that we are required to have a public meeting in each of the 21 counties and that's for the public to give us comments on what the Preliminary Plan says and on what the preliminary mapping says. It's primarily for the office and any member of the Commission that wants to be at any of them to accept comments from the general public. The language in the rules says no earlier than 45 days after the publication of the Preliminary Plan, and no later than 90 days, which is why we have 45 days to go through the entire state. They are public meetings and not technically SPC meetings but because they are advertised in public and I will have to ask the DAG for their opinion when we get to that point, if we have more than nine, it's probably not a problem, because we will have publicly noticed them.

Chairman Wright said we wouldn't be taking any action at those meetings.

Director Rendeiro said no action will be taken, it will be listening.

Nick Angarone said that this doesn't necessarily change your plan or nor do I expect it's going to change anything going forward but I do feel the need to express concern about the states, not just mine, not just Donna's capacity to handle this update and continue the same pace and level of review that we've been undergoing for Plan Endorsement. Speaking just for my office, I have staff working on this almost full time and no additional staff to put forth the significant effort that the updated State Plan needs. Again, I don't expect that change anything.

Director Rendeiro said now that those Plan Endorsements that expired in March, I do anticipate the PE activity to be reduced.

Nick Angarone said that I appreciate your and the Chairman's update on what you heard at the planning conference last month, but I'm wondering if there was a recording that we would have access to. Did the speakers provide their

comments in writing so we can get a real full idea of what some of their thoughts were? Or will you be summarizing that?

Director Rendeiro responded by saying that I do have a draft from staff that summarized it. Once it's finalized, we will send it out in the next couple of weeks or sooner.

Director Rendeiro asked does any member of the Commission that was in the room for the redevelopment forum, want to share any feedback.

Commissioner Santola said that would just echo what Donna said. First of all, I was really pleased and I have to admit a little surprised with the attendance not because it wasn't a good topic but because there were a lot of good topics and a lot of really good speakers. I also would commend the Chairman for sort of speaking for all of us and relaying our commitment to the process and you being on the panel was a big part of that. I also thought there was a good interaction. What we saw on that panel is indicative of what may ultimately be the challenge in moving the planning process forward. Everybody addressed the question from their silo and nobody was looking to the silo to the left or to the right so environmental justice wasn't really about housing affordability and so on down the line. We're all going to have to be able to see the different perspectives, whether it's coming out of, DEP, NIOF, or NJ Future in order to move the process because it is somewhat collaborative. It's like legislation, no one is going to get their way, all the way down the line. We're going to need to be able to see through the other person's eye and position in the process.

Director Rendeiro said the ultimate goal of the State Plan is to balance all of these. I ended the session by saying this process is going to be a compromise process. Like every good compromise, nobody gets everything but everybody gets something so hopefully, we can do that. It was standing room only and my estimate is that they were like 85 people in the room. It was a planning group so people are very interested in the State Plan. It's clearly something that the planning community is very interested in making sure we get it right this time.

Commissioner Esser said that I can add that for those who weren't in the room, NJ Future, NJAPA, and Donna did a good job of assembling a group of people that offer varying viewpoints. There was Kandyce Perry from DEP talking about environmental justice. Michael Kolber representing the City of Trenton, Gil Medina, CRBE from his perspective, and then there was Chris Sturm and Kate Boicourt from the Watershed Alliance, as well as Janice Kovach, the mayor of Clinton as well as a housing developer George Vallone. You really had a wide spectrum of thoughts and somewhat conflicting but also agreeable points of view. There are parts of the state where we want to conserve, and there are parts of the state where we want to develop and how do we align those? The thought that I shared towards the end of the meeting was really focusing on how we can work regionally. Donna and others have echoed about utilizing the counties to assist with the planning, and how we can really work regionally from a planning and economic development and land use perspective so that it's not always about political boundaries. If that's something that the state plan can address that would be really terrific.

Director Rendeiro thanked Commissioner Esser for her comments and asked Walter Lane if he has anything to add from the county's perspective because they are an integral part of this process.

Walter Lane said that it was a really good discussion. There are some examples of where counties have applied this State Plan that can show how it could work. As Danielle was saying if we can incentivize some of these regional planning efforts, I think you'll pull more people into the state planning process, knowing that something good is going to come out at the end and really incentivizing good planning and rewarding the places that are doing good planning. Good planning means addressing climate change, addressing environmental justice, and doing all the things that everyone talked about but in a comprehensive way. There should be some sort of incentives or rewards for that or streamlining permitting to help make those things happen to keep those places engaged and moving forward. The county planners are looking for an opportunity to really do some good work and be of assistance and kind of show what county planning can do to help bring all these different groups together and come to some consensus on priorities and policies and procedures. I look forward to working with everyone.

Commissioner Santola said that I think having the mayor on there was really valuable because you got to see the rub that's got to come right out of the box of home rule versus a more regionalized sense of planning. I was appreciative of the fact that she was very candid with her comments. It became very apparent where some of the early rubs are going to be.

Director Rendeiro said that yes, one of the reasons why we picked Janice was because we knew she would be very open. To Bruce's comment, having Michael Kolber from Trenton was really important and Walter was on the panel as well. It was a really good representative panel. We'll try to replicate that type of format. When we start talking about specific topics, we can have different views on the same topic, whether it's economic growth or environmental protection, then that's where we'll start to dig deeper into policies.

Director Rendeiro said that Mr. Chairman, what I would like to propose is for the non-ex-officio members, please let me know if you would like to be part of the PDC and if there's any particular topic you would like to be involved with. If you have an interest in affordable housing, environmental or economic development, please let me know so we can then focus those activities towards you as well. Please provide me with any comments you have on the proposal. I will send out the presentation and we will make any changes that make sense. So far, the two main ones are to make sure we specifically include the centers in the proposal. That was the intention, but I didn't identify it. The other was to identify tourism as an area in the INA phase two. If there's anything further to that, please let me know. At our next SPC meeting, I'll look to request a vote for the process with the understanding that those dates are flexible and that we can move them.

Chairman Wright said that I think it's important for folks to know the office is in the process of looking at consultants to help with the preparation of the preliminary plan, which kicks this off. We should expect updates on how that's going too.

Director Rendeiro said when I have things to report on that, I can do so.

Chairman Wright asked for questions or comments from the Commission members.

Joe Atchison III, Assistant Secretary, Department of Agriculture said it's been a learning experience already and I look forward to working with this group, as long as I'm in my current role, filling the duties of Secretary of Agriculture until a permanent replacement is named.

Commissioner Somers said that just have a question about the process. When voting on minutes, it's my understanding that you don't have to have been present, you have to have read them. Is that correct?

Director Rendeiro responded by saying that that is correct to my understanding. I'll get clarification from the DAG on that. My understanding is you don't have to be present at the previous meeting, as long as you read the minutes and believe, with a fair amount of certainty that they were accurate.

Vice Chair McKenna said that I just wanted to add, we actually have had clarification on that issue by the Attorney General's office and we are permitted to vote, regardless of whether or not we were present for the meeting.

Chairman Wright thanked Vice Chair McKenna for the information.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further comments from the Committee or the public, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Joe Atchison and seconded by Andy Swords. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 11:51 a.m.

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**NEW JERSEY STATE PLANNING COMMISSION ATTENDEES**  
**DATE: JULY 5 2023    TIME: 9:32 AM**

Adam Marshall – DAG  
Joe Forte – DOS, SOS  
Matt Baumgardner – NJDEP  
Barbara Wooley-Dillon – PP, AICP – City of AC  
Kyle Cruz – NJHMFA  
Mark Villinger – Ocean County  
Susan Weber – NJDOT  
Larisa Paxton – Ocean County  
Walter Lane – PP, AICP, Somerset County  
Jonathan Sternesky – NJHMFA  
Paul Kates – Planner, Stone Harbor  
Constance Mahon – BA, Wildwood Crest  
Mirah Becker  
Brenda Haycock  
Charlie Kratovil  
H.R.