



State of New Jersey

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MEMORANDUM TO:	State Planning Commission
FROM:	Donna Rendeiro
RE:	Township of Berkeley Biennial Review – PIA Status and Map Amendment
DATE:	July 31, 2020

Attached is Lisa Avichal's memorandum of recommendation to amend the State Plan Policy Map in Berkeley Township, Ocean County. The memorandum also details the status of the Township's Plan Implementation Agreement.

While the status and management of the Plan Implementation Agreement is generally done administratively and would not be subject to State Planning Commission review, the requested map amendment requires the approval of the Commission. After two presentations to the Plan Implementation Committee, the PIC supported the map amendment and voted to move it to the full Commission.

The Township received Plan Endorsement approval on July 6, 2012. Shortly after their endorsement, the Township was devastated by Superstorm Sandy, which caused a delay in implementation of the some of the PIA items. To date, 14 of the 25 items (or 56%) have been completed. The remaining 11 items are in various stages of completion. As requested by the Plan Implementation Committee, the Office is in receipt of a resolution by the Governing Body committing to the completion of the remaining items, with an approximate 6 month extension of the original deadlines, primarily due to budgetary and logistical issues related to the current health emergency.

MAP AMENDMENT

The subject area is an approximately 9.54 acre portion of an 11.8 acre subdivision that is currently in a PA-5 area. The subject area is also in a redevelopment area and is intended to be an affordable housing

project as the fourth of four phases of the Manitou Park Redevelopment Project. The requested map amendment would change the PA-5 to a PA-2.

The Office supports this change for the following reasons:

- An expert report submitted to the Department of Environmental Protection provided evidence that the environmental conditions with the proposed area do not appear to be consistent with conditions that typify lands in a PA-5 area. Ms. Avichal's memo details those specifics.
- The subject area is contiguous to an existing project and is part of the Manitou Park Redevelopment Project which is currently a PA-2. The entire redevelopment project is 77 acres, is largely completed. The project includes a mix of single family and multi family housing that is approximately 50 – 60% affordable.
- As part of the Township's Third Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, Berkeley entered into an agreement to build the affordable housing that is intended for the subject site in exchange for the extension of sewer and water lines to replace inadequate on-site wells and septic systems.
- The project is close to recreation, religious services and some retail that will be expanded as the project progresses, making the community walkable to many services. Funding will also be provided to renovate an historic schoolhouse near the site.
- While there are still many open items that prevent DEP from permitting the project, there has been agreement by the Township and/or the Developer to resolve all environmental issues and these actions are conditions of the required NJDEP permits. Discussion of many of those resolutions are underway and the execution of those resolutions is dependent upon the recommended planning area change. Ms. Avichal's memo details these specifics.
- The Township has agreed to preserve an approximately 78 acre tract of land for habitat conservation in addition to other mitigation actions.

While the primary concern of the Commission is to ensure that the subject area meets the criteria of a Planning Area 2, the end use of the site must be considered. The provision of affordable housing within a market rate community and provides walkable access to community services achieves the State Plan goal of providing a full range of housing choices that is planned and located to maintain the existing character of the neighborhood.

It is because of these considerations, I recommend that the State Planning Commission approve the requested map amendment.