



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
NEW JERSEY STATE PLANNING COMMISSION
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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 August 4, 2021
Zoom Video Conference**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Wright called the August 4, 2021 video conference of the New Jersey State Planning Commission (SPC) to order at 9:33 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present

Andy Swords, Designee for Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, Commissioner, Department of Transportation
Danielle Esser, Director of Governance, NJ Economic Development Authority (arrived at 9:40 a.m.)
Edward J. McKenna, Vice Chair, Public Member
Elizabeth Terenik, Public Member (arrived at 9:35 a.m.)
Frank Gaffney, Designee for President Fiordaliso, Board of Public Utilities
Melanie Willoughby, Designee for Tahesha Way, Secretary of State, Department of State
Monique Purcell, Designee for Douglas Fisher, Secretary, Department of Agriculture
Nick Angarone, Designee for Shawn LaTourette, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection
Sean Thompson, Designee for Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver, Commissioner, Department of Community Affairs
Shanel Robinson, County Commissioner Director, County Member
Thomas Wright, Chairman

Others Present

See Attachment A

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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Due to a technical error the minutes from July 7, 2021 will be presented on the next SPC meeting for approval.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Chairman Wright commented that he's looking forward to having the SPC meetings in-person again. About today's presentation, Chairman Wright expressed the importance of recognizing Rutgers University for their extraordinary educational resource for the State of New Jersey. Also, that many of the important policies and directions come from the extraordinary leadership and participation of Rutgers faculty and their associates.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Staffing

Director Rendeiro commented that the Return to the Office date for the Office, with a hybrid model, has been postponed. We await the date of return. It is still anticipated that we will return to a full schedule in the office in September.

While Mr. Karp, who has retired, has agreed to be available for questions and technical assistance after retirement, not having an overlap is unfortunate. Until this position is filled, our ability to move forward is severely hampered. We can work on other aspects of endorsement, but the mapping discussions are lengthy and our ability to move forward will be negatively impacted without an immediate filling of this position.

Since the July 7th SPC meeting:

- Vernon was endorsed
- The Office has completed Manchester's Opportunities and Constraints Report
- Wildwood Crest completed their MSA
- Woodstown prepetition meeting was held and is working on their MSA
- Princeton's prepetition meeting is scheduled for August 10th
- Avalon and North Plainfield have confirmed their participation in the process

The Director thanked Walter Lane from Somerset County for coordinating a meeting with all the Somerset County towns that have expiring centers. Many of those towns are in the process and on different stages. The plan is to help answering any questions and to see how can be better coordinated.

Rule Update

Draft language for the rule update will be presented to the Commission today. We are not asking for a resolution of approval today as there are still open items. Our agency partners have reviewed the draft language and we received comments that have been incorporated into the draft for discussion.

Map Updates

The map amendment proposal from PSEG is in the public hearing period. The length of time for agency comments has expired, but the public comment period is still open for about another 30 days. We are hoping to bring the matter to the PIC in August. Waterfront Development, Coastal Wetlands Individual Permit, and a CAFRA Individual Permit were approved on June 24th and the Freshwater Wetlands Individual Permit was approved on July 23rd.

Technical Assistance

A draft of the OPA document that guides municipalities through resiliency planning is being reviewed and we have received DEP comments. The document is based on DEP's guidance website and points municipal officials to their links. Once the draft is ready for a wider distribution, we will do so.

Planning continues for the FEMA Bootcamp. The new term, "Resiliency Accelerator" will likely be the final name, as it better aligns with the goals of the program. A questionnaire regarding the training needs that municipal officials need to assist them in resiliency planning was finalized after incorporating comments from the steering committee. It is anticipated that the questionnaire will be included in OPA's next newsletter.

On the agenda today is Jeanne Herb, Co-Director, NJ Climate Change Resource Center, Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy at Rutgers to discuss their Climate Resiliency Corps and the technical assistance partnership that OPA And Rutgers have formed, and to present a video they produced so that the Commission can get a flavor of the positive impact the program has had on local governments. Funding for Rutgers technical assistance program was secured through the budget process that will enable longer term technical assistance for municipalities working toward endorsement. The Office is in discussions now regarding how to prioritize the need. It was determined that in addition to the originally anticipated work product of a vulnerability assessment for Atlantic Highlands and Keansburg, the additional funding would allow the students to develop a resiliency plan that is required as per MLUL and Plan Endorsement. Once that effort is scoped out, it will be determined whether we can expand the program to other municipalities. Municipalities that are also participating in the program are Gloucester City, Stafford Township and the 4 Wildwoods (as a region).

Policy Initiatives

Work has begun on developing a warehouse sprawl policy to recommend to the SPC. This work will be the basis for responding to S-3688 if that Bill becomes law. Even if the bill does not move forward in its current form, the SPC should develop a policy related to the subject. This subject will be the first policy statement that will form a series of land use policies to guide municipal land use planning.

Interagency Coordination

We continue to discuss designation of centers in vulnerable areas with DEP at the staff level. We have scheduled an in-person discussion (a brainstorming session) with staffs from OPA and DEP planning in mid-September to resolve some differences between the Climate Change Strategy and the Center designation process.

DEP's Interagency Council on Climate Change met on July 13th. DEP presented comments received and proposed changes to the Strategy. Monthly meetings have been scheduled through next June with the objective of developing departmental action plans. We have received their recommendations and are putting together the individual departmental action plans. Of particular note is that one recommendation is an update to the State Plan to better incorporate climate change requirements.

The third Environmental Justice Interagency Council (EJIC) meeting that was scheduled for July 22, 2021 was postponed. We await rescheduling.

The final interactive Jersey Waterworks interactive project map was debuted at the Jersey Waterworks annual meeting on July 28th. It is a very useful map that captures CSOs and sunny day flooding information in addition to social vulnerability information.

The NJ Coastal Coalition has received \$250,000 from this year's State budget to initiate a resiliency institute focusing on Atlantic City as a pilot for action. The Office will monitor the activity to ensure consistency with DEP's Climate Change Strategy document.

Outreach Activities

In addition to the next newsletter going out shortly, the Office is participating in a Rutgers research project entitled, “Economic Developers’ Perceptions of the Environmental Risks of Moving Goods”. This is integral to our work on developing a regional warehouse policy. The first interview was held on July 26th; the second on August 3rd.

OPA will likely be involved in two sessions at this year’s League of Municipality’s Conference. The first one is related to technical assistance for resiliency planning programs with FEMA and Rutgers. The second is run by Sustainable Jersey to talk about the partnership with Sustainable Jersey.

Presentation

Rutgers University Climate Resilience Corps, Jeanne Herb, Co-Director, NJ Climate Change Resource Center, Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy; Rutgers University

Director Rendeiro introduced Jeanne Herb, Co-Director for the NJ Climate Change Resource Center at the Bloustein School in Rutgers, for the presentation. As part of EO 89, Rutgers was tasked with providing technical assistance to DEP; they received funding last year and that funding was continued this year. On one hand, I’d like to offer this as an incentive for plan endorsed communities; but for the greater good, all municipalities should receive this assistance if needed. We have been working with communities about a year, and what we’ve learned is that municipalities love the program, but they don’t want a “one and done” session and would like continuous assistance. We partner with DEP, OEM, FEMA. Our main goal is to make the assistance consistent with DEP strategy.

Jeanne Herb commented that as a result of the successful partnership for the technical assistance program provided to Atlantic Highlands and Keansburg and in collaboration with DEP, OPA, and OEM, the New Jersey Climate Change Resource Center has established a Climate Resilience Corps of graduate students. The students are trained in climate resilience planning to provide support to New Jersey municipalities in assessing hazards from changing climate conditions. Participating students include those in graduate programs in natural sciences, engineering, community planning, and public policy, including fellows in the Rutgers Coastal Climate Risk and Resilience (C2R2) program. Although it is housed at Rutgers, the concept is so complex, multi sector that it cannot reside in one government agency.

This presentation can be found in the following links:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=erHPLbEpB7o>

<https://njclimateresourcecenter.rutgers.edu/nj-adapt/>

Chairman Wright thanked Ms. Herb for the presentation and recognized how struck he is by the capacity Rutgers is building and the ability to connect it to the state policy framework. Particularly notable are the comments from the students regarding the local level of governance. The database is an extraordinary resource that can be used to leverage local planning. The real challenge of conversations around local and regional planning came from using different sets of numbers. This will help to expedite the process and make planning easier and more powerful in New Jersey. The Chairman expressed that he was excited to look into the database and share it with the Commission and colleagues.

Ms. Herb stated that we are working with many state agencies and local municipalities so that they can download and use the data for their specific purpose.

Director Rendeiro commented that the program, not only utilizes planners but also the scientific practitioners show what is possible and what is not possible to achieve. Also, that the video shows how important this is to the local governments. Ms. Herb added that it is a value to the students as well.

Commissioner Terenik thanked Ms. Herb for the presentation and looks forward to sharing this information with her community. It was agreed to schedule a separate meeting for Commissioners to look at the database in detail.

Andy Swords thanked Ms. Herb for the presentation and commented that it's impressive to look how the municipal representatives and the students are learning from each other and that it's very valuable.

Monique Purcell thanked Ms. Herb for the presentation and commented that it's a wonderful tool and that it is important to know that the tool will provide accurate data to everyone.

Nick Angarone commented that with the coordination of Rutgers, OPA, DOT, OEM and hopefully moving forward with DOH will be critically important. Also, that the NJDEP has been issuing a local resilience planning toolkit that includes a guidance on sea level rise bringing the plan of the Executive Order 89 and the Interagency Council on Climate Resilience into a coordinated action. Meg Cavanaugh, who was a student in the original studio, will be joining DEP as a full-time employee.

Vice Chair McKenna thanked Ms. Herb for the presentation and that she is still working on behalf of the State. The Chair requested that the minutes reflect the full Commission's feels the same.

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion of Proposed Rule Language

Director Rendeiro commented that the draft language for the rule update will be presented to the Commission today. OPA is not asking for a resolution of approval today in order to give additional review time. The original timeline will be adjusted once the final proposed language is approved. OPA received comments that have been incorporated into the draft for discussion.

Director Rendeiro referred to Matt Blake for the presentation.

The Current rules can be found here: <https://nj.gov/state/planning/assets/docs/meeting-materials/spc/materials/stateplanningrules-clean-copy-2021-8-4.pdf>

The track changes document that includes the current language can be found here: <https://nj.gov/state/planning/assets/docs/meeting-materials/spc/materials/trackchanges-stateplanningrules-2021-8-4.pdf>

Director Rendeiro commented that after today, we ask the Commission members and the public to submit their comments, and we will complete the few items that are still under investigation. We will then send out a new document out for review and comments. The document will be then presented to the PIC at the August meeting and hopefully to the SPC at the September meeting. After approval by the SPC, the public process for rule updates will begin. The director commented that the DAG is working with OPA on this process.

Chairman Wright asked the Director to remind everyone on how the Public Rule Update works. The Director responded that the Governor's Office gets involved in the process once all the comments are back from our interagency partners. Once the SPC Resolution to approve the draft language is approved, we will begin the submission to the New Jersey Register where there will be a thirty-day pre-notice public notice period. The notice of the proposal with final documents for SPC to be review an authorization to be submitted for a sixty-day public comment period. The Director commented that this Resolution should be by the end of this year if not by January of 2022.

Chairman Wright thanked Matt, Donna, the OPA staff, the members of the Commission and the agencies who helped on this process. He expressed that overall, the Commission is moving forward including virtual public meetings which will provide a better opportunity for the public to be involved in these conversations and to streamline the process. Chairman Wright commented that he feels optimistic about eventually having new rules in 2022 that will be important on the role of the SPC.

Director Rendeiro commented that the office is not only trying to modernize the PE process but any other potential updates to the Plan. Particularly given the fact that in the climate change strategy there was a suggestion for us to update the Plan. Some of the things that were incorporated into the rules include EO-89 and EO-23, which add to the process but overall moving into an easier and more efficient process for the municipalities.

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

Vice Chair McKenna thanked Director Rendeiro and the OPA staff especially Matt Blake for their hard work on getting the rules update.

Melanie Willoughby commented that as she is watching Director Rendeiro and her team working on this project, she thanked and congratulated them for their efforts to update the rules. She suggested that the next effort should be to change the name of the office to the Office of State Planning. Chair Wright supported this suggestion.

Vice Chair McKenna also thanked the PIC.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further comments from the Commission or the public, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to adjourn. Edward McKenna made the motion, and it was seconded by Danielle Esser. The meeting was adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

ATTACHMENT A
NEW JERSEY STATE PLANNING COMMISSION ATTENDEES
DATE: AUGUST 4, 2021 TIME: 9:33 AM

Steven Gleeson - DAG
Matt Baumgardner - NJDEP
Tori Kemp - Ocean County
Jelena Lasko - NJDOT
Dave DuMont - NJDEP
Rhyan Grech - Pinelands Preservation Alliance
Meg Cavanagh - NJDEP
Jason Kasler - AICP/PP NJPO
Brianna Keys - Governor's Office
Jeanne Herb - Rutgers Univ. Co-Director NJ Climate Change Resource Ctr.
Mark Villinger - PP/ AICP CFM, Ocean County Planning
A. Rosario -
Grant Lucking -