



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

STATE PLANNING COMMISSION

OFFICE OF SMART GROWTH

PO BOX 204

TRENTON NJ 08625-0204

JON S. CORZINE
Governor

SUSAN BASS LEVIN
Commissioner

CHRISTIANA FOGLIO
Chair

EILEEN SWAN
Executive Director & Secretary

**New Jersey State Planning Commission
Plan Implementation Committee
Minutes of the Meeting Held January 24, 2007
Mary Roebing Building
Trenton, New Jersey**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair John Eskilson called the meeting of the Plan Implementation Committee to order at 9:43 a.m.

Committee Members Present

John Eskilson, Chair

Debbie Mans, Governor's Office, Smart Growth Ombudsman

Marge DellaVecchia, Representative of Commissioner Susan Bass Levin

Liz Semple, Representative of Commissioner Lisa Jackson, Department of Environmental Protection

Susan Weber, Representative of Commissioner Kris Kolluri, Department of Transportation

Roberta Lang, Representative of Secretary Charles Kuperus, Department of Agriculture

Marilyn Lennon, Public Member

Mayor Ed McKenna, Public Member

Committee Members Not Present

Michele Byers, Public Member

Tom Michnewicz, Public Member

Others Present

Eileen Swan, Executive Director, Office of Smart Growth

Joseph Donald, Deputy Executive Director, Office of Smart Growth

Ben Spinelli, Chief Council and Policy Director, Office of Smart Growth

Dan Reynolds, Deputy Attorney General

Courtenay Mercer, Planning Director, Office of Smart Growth



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Jung Kim, Principal Planner, Office of Smart Growth
Corey Piasecki, Planner, Office of Smart Growth
Danielle Stevens, Office of Smart Growth
Stacy Perrine, Office of Smart Growth
Bill Purdie, Department of Environmental Protection
Others-Attachment A

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Eskilson asked for a motion to approve the minutes of December 14, 2006 Plan Implementation Meeting. Roberta Lang seconded. All were in favor.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

There were no comments at this time.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Eileen Swan, Executive Director of the Office of Smart Growth, commended Upper Township for their effort and reiterated Bill Purdie's statement made at the last PIC meeting in which he stated Upper's Petition would be "used as a template for petitions in the future".

PRESENTATIONS

Upper Township's Petition for Plan Endorsement: By Jung Kim, Principal Planner, Office of Smart Growth

Mr. Kim began by stating that Upper Township has moved faster than other towns in the Plan Endorsement process. He explained how growth in the town has been mostly suburban, making the development of centers more difficult. He also stated that Upper is a recipient of a Smart Future Grant, which encouraged the Township along with Middle and Dennis to participate in Plan Endorsement. Next Mr. Kim explained how Community Wastewater Systems are being used in town cores to remedy the lack of sewer service. Mr. Kim also expressed his respect for the township in their saying no to big box retail and mini malls. Mr. Kim stated the importance of design guidelines in the Plan Endorsement process, particularly in conjunction with the restoration of historic areas. All of the relevant State Plan goals were then listed and an explanation of how Upper's application is consistent; these included the conservation of natural



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resources and the creation and maintenance of adequate public facilities. Mr. Kim ended his presentation by recommending that Upper Township be endorsed.

John Eskilson asked if the growth projections, currently an early PIA item, could be finalized by the next State Planning Committee Meeting. Eileen Swan answered that it could be done but that it shouldn't hold up the Plan Endorsement process.

Paul Dietrich, Upper Township Engineer, and Marcia Shiffman of Maser Consulting then introduced themselves and thanked Eileen Swan, Jung Kim and OSG staff for all of their hard work. Paul Dietrich added that working with a Memorandum of Understanding and accompanying Action Plan was very helpful and results in a complete product.

Committee member Ed McKenna stated that he was impressed with the Plan Implementation Agreement and the aggressive timeframes put forth. He congratulated and thanked Upper Township for taking on all the tasks including addressing its affordable housing needs.

Bill Purdie, of the Department of Environmental Protection, stated that he is pleased with Upper Township and hopes that their willingness to go the extra mile will "flow to the rest of the peninsula and the rest of the state as well".

Ed McKenna then stated that design guidelines, while not being very difficult to do, are very important.

With no further comments from the committee, the floor was then opened for public comments.

Public Comment on Upper Township's Petition for Plan Endorsement

Chris Sturm, of NJ Future, stated that Upper Township's Petition for Plan Endorsement could in fact be used as a template for the rest of the state. She then asked DEP about the status of the Sewer System Plan. Bill Purdie answered that a draft Wastewater Management Plan has to be submitted.

With no further public comments regarding Upper Township, John Eskilson motioned to approve sending the Township's Plan Endorsement petition and OSG recommendation on to the State Planning Commission for action at their next meeting. The motion was seconded by Ed McKenna, and all were in favor. John Eskilson (being a County Administrator from Sussex



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County) then recused himself and handed the meeting over to Ed McKenna at 10:30 a.m. Ed McKenna then called for a three minute break to set up for the Sussex County presentation.

Sussex County's Petition for Plan Endorsement: By Courtenay Mercer, Planning Director, Office of Smart Growth, and Corey Piasecki, Area Planner, Office of Smart Growth

Ms. Mercer began her presentation by thanking all who helped with Sussex County's Plan, including the Sussex County Board of Chosen Freeholders. Corey Piasecki continued with the geographic context of the county, pointing out which of the county's municipalities are subject to the Highland's Regional Master Plan. He clarified that the areas that fall within the Highland's Preservation area are not subject to the Plan Endorsement application.

Ms. Mercer presented the timeline from the receipt of grant monies for planning to the adoption of the plan in 2004.

Mr. Piasecki then presented a graphic comparing an area of sprawl to an area with two centers with dense development. He added that it is up to the municipalities to conduct a capacity analysis to decide where centers would be best suited to go.

Ms. Mercer then emphasized that there are no state map changes proposed by Sussex County's Petition and ended the presentation by stating that the Plan Implementation Agreement timelines were agreed upon by the Office of Smart Growth, State Agencies, and the county.

Ed McKenna then opened the meeting to public comments.

Public Comment on Sussex County's Petition for Plan Endorsement

Senator Robert Littel, of the 24th District (Including Sussex), would like to see swift consideration and endorsement of the Sussex Plan because a lot of people have worked long and hard on this plan. Senator Littel also stated that freeholders have allocated money for various projects which they would like to see done in the near future.

Assemblyman Guy Gregg congratulated OSG on their presentation and added comments about the value of Sussex County for the State of New Jersey. He added that he feels that Sussex County should be a model for the rest of the state. He recommended that the PIC should act affirmatively on the application.



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Freeholder Mutrano thanked Senator Littel for the funds obtained for various projects in Sussex County. He stated that the plan set forth is in fact consistent with the State Plan and he wants to see Sussex County Endorsed.

Mike Herson, of the Sierra Club, stated that the plan set forth is short-sighted and threatens the water supply in the region. He then stated that Sussex County is turning a blind eye to the Highland's Plan and, when referencing the Plan Endorsement Guidelines Section four, the Highlands Regional Master Plan cannot be ignored. He feels the attempt at Plan Endorsement is an attempt to sidestep good planning. He also stated that, if the impact on surrounding areas is not considered, it will violate State Planning Commission Policy.

Eileen Swan then responded that the Office of Smart Growth has been in constant contact with the Highland's Commission on this application.

Erik Snyder, Sussex County Planning Director, stated the Sussex County Plan Endorsement process has been a collaborative effort.

Ed McKenna then stated that all state agencies signed off on Sussex County Plan Endorsement.

Barbara Palmer, of Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions, stated that in 2001 the NJ Development Plan designated the Highlands Region and 65% of the population of Sussex County falls in this region. She stated that in order for the Highlands to be fully protected, the Highlands Region Master Plan must be finalized before the Sussex County plan is endorsed.

Richard Zeoli, a resident of Byram, stated that the Sussex plan was put together by people from all walks of life that care passionately about Sussex County: farmers, historians, government officials, and that the main goal is to preserve Sussex County's rural character. He feels the Sussex County Plan must be endorsed.

Fred Suljic, a planning consultant in Vernon, stated that the county took the initiative to protect the environment and demonstrate good planning. He also stated that Vernon has done as much planning as they could possibly do and that they are supportive of Sussex County Plan Endorsement.

Steve Oroho, Sussex County Freeholder, stated that he saw the hard work done to develop this reasonable plan and it should move forward.





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Wilma Frey, of the NJ Highlands Coalition, asked that OSG reconsider Sussex Plan Endorsement at least until after the adoption of the Highlands Regional Plan. She also stated that she feels public comments are not considered enough and should be included in the reports. She ended by stating that the main goal is to preserve an environmentally sensitive area.

David Pringle, of New Jersey Environmental Federation and in consensus with the Sierra Club, stated that there seems to be a conflict between what is to be done at SPC meetings and PIC meetings. He feels the public never gets a straight answer at either meeting. He also stated that he sees a double standard at meetings; specifically, that the time allotted for public comments is too short. He continued by stating that just because all state agencies are on board with a plan does not mean that the plan is the right thing to do. He ended by stating that the legal thing to do would be to not go forward with the plan.

David Troast, Director of Planning for Sparta Township, commended the planners and believes that the criticism is only coming from those who are not professional planners and do not understand the process. He then stated that the plan is ready and if all parties wait for a "perfect" plan then nothing will ever be done.

Fred Dorenzo, a property owner in Andover, asked how the individual towns work together with the county. He wanted to know if the County and State supersede the town. He also stated that the town had hired Amy Greene's Company to do an environmental study and they found state and national endangered species. He voiced concerns about the future of the town and the need to address growth issues.

Eileen Swan explained that Andover is set to expire as a town center in January of 2008 and that Plan Endorsement is required for the municipality to maintain the center or to change it. It will be up to the municipality to decide what to do with the center.

Tammy Horsfield, of the Sussex County Chamber of Commerce and the Sussex County Strategic Growth Committee, stated that the committee, which is diverse and hard working, traveled to every town in Sussex County to obtain public input. She also stated that 60% of workers in Sussex County commute out of the county to work and more should be done to create job opportunities to keep residents in the county. She ended by stating that she believes the plan is indeed the right decision.

Chris Sturm, of NJ Future, asked whether or not the committee knows the trade-offs in accepting the Sussex County Plan before the Highlands Plan.



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Maryann Smith, Hardystown Township Administrator, stated that her town is highly supportive of OSG's recommendations and are waiting for the Sussex Plan to be adopted so it can be used a base for their municipal plan.

Mary Eniliou, a Vernon Resident, thanked OSG for going through the process and stated that the Master Plan is a good plan that is good for all municipalities.

The floor was closed to public comments at 12:15 p.m. and the committee was asked to make any final comments.

Committee Comments on Sussex County Petition for Plan Endorsement

Marge DellaVecchia stated that the professionals have a responsibility to be fair and ethical in implementing proper planning. She recommended that the matter be moved to the State Planning Commission with special thought as to how the Highlands Plan gets put in the Plan Implementation Agreement.

Ed McKenna stated that it would not be reasonable to tell Sussex County that after seven years of hard work, the plan must be put on hold due to the Highlands. He also stated that all concerns are legitimate but to put the process on hold any further would be unfair to the county and unfair to the process in general.

Liz Semple added that the Department of Environmental Protection supports regional planning and the process relies on local governments getting on board with OSG and state guidelines.

Eileen Swan stated that she spoke at the Highlands Council last week and though the resolution the Council considered did not pass, OSG incorporated the agreements reached into the Sussex County report and PIA as a gesture of good faith.

Debbie Mans added that OSG, SPC, and the Highlands Council must work hand in hand and the governor's office does and will continue to read all public comments submitted.

Ed McKenna ended by stating the committee should never defer motions, instead they should pass them and allow for modifications at a later date. This will keep the ball rolling and allow for more to be accomplished.



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Mr. McKenna made a motion to approve sending the County's Plan Endorsement petition and the OSG recommendation on to the State Planning Commission for action at their next meeting; the motion was seconded by Marilynn Lennon. All were in favor.

With no further comments from the committee the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Eileen Swan
Secretary and Executive Director

Dated: