



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*

LT. GOVERNOR TAHESHA L. WAY  
*SECRETARY OF STATE*

THOMAS K. WRIGHT  
*CHAIRMAN*

DONNA A. RENDEIRO  
*Executive Director/Secretary*

**New Jersey State Planning Commission  
Minutes of the Meeting Held on November 1, 2023  
Zoom Video Conference**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Wright called the November 1, 2023 video conference of the New Jersey State Planning Commission (SPC) to order at 9:33 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**

Danielle Esser, Director of Governance, NJ Economic Development Authority  
Frank Gaffney, Designee for President Guhl-Sadovy, Board of Public Utilities  
Susan Weber, Designee for Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, Commissioner, Department of Transportation  
Nick Angarone, Designee for Shawn LaTourette, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection  
Edward J. McKenna, Vice Chair, Public Member  
Keith Henderson, Designee for Jacquelyn Suarez, Acting Commissioner, Department of Community Affairs  
Elizabeth Terenik, Public Member  
Melanie Willoughby, Designee for Tahesha Way, Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Department of State  
Stephen Santola, Public Member  
Julia Somers, Public Member  
Jeffrey Oakman, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor  
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 October 4, 2023. Julia Somers made the motion, and Melanie Willoughby seconded it. With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote: Ayes: (12) Danielle Esser, Frank Gaffney, Susan Weber, Nick Angarone, Ed McKenna, Keith Henderson, Elizabeth Terenik, Melanie Willoughby, Stephen Santola, Julia Somers, Jeffrey Oakman, and Thomas Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (0). The October 4, 2023 minutes were approved.

## **CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

Chairman Wright stated there was a change to the agenda which Donna Rendeiro will provide more detail in terms of the warehouse siting model ordinance. We were requested by an agency to give them more time to review, so we will be pulling back the third resolution. After the State Planning Commission meeting this morning, we will have the Plan Development Committee meeting where will receive an update on the Infrastructure Needs Assessment.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Rendeiro announced Colleen McGurk will be retiring effective December 31 and Martha Newmeyer accepted a new position with the Assembly office and her last day will be on November 3. Although we have significant staff challenges, we don't anticipate it will have an impact on the State Plan update as we have a number of recruitments efforts in place.

The Office received a copy of a letter from Walter Lane, on behalf of the Somerset County Planning Board to DEP Commissioner LaTourette commending DEP for drafting the 2023 Strategic Climate Action Plan and providing the County an opportunity to provide comments. In that letter, Mr. Lane references the State Plan and makes several suggestions toward implementation:

“The draft Plan contains numerous strategies and action steps related to land use polices. The draft Plan should clearly state that these action steps and strategies are consistent with and support the implementation of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP). The current update to the SDRP provides an opportunity to ensure both these planning processes are aligned. This will ensure the SDRP's goals to balance growth while preserving and protecting our natural resources can be achieved. We believe the updated State Development and Redevelopment Plan that integrates climate adaptation and mitigation solutions will be a valuable tool for identifying, prioritizing, and coordinating these land use and investment decisions.

To achieve the goals of the draft 2023 NJ Strategic Climate Action Plan and an updated SDRP, Somerset County encourages the NJDEP to consider providing more technical assistance and increased grant funding opportunities to both counties and municipalities to advance the strategies and recommendations of the draft plan. “

Since the October 4 SPC meeting:

- Staff is working with Dover, Burlington Township, Burlington City, Seaside Heights, Little Egg Harbor, Ocean Township, Ocean City, Barnegat, and Berkeley on mapping and other requirements toward Plan Endorsement.
- Seaside Heights' governing body passed the resolution approving the vision statement that was written as a result of two visioning sessions held with the public.

- Red Bank's prepetition meeting is scheduled for December 12.
- We received notice that Sparta has begun preparations to participate in the PE process including creating their PEAC with new members.
- Staff is working with Riverside on its biennial review.

The Office was invited to a meeting by Atlantic County to discuss the major development initiatives underway in and around the Atlantic City International Airport and the aviation industry in general. The partners in this initiative include the Atlantic County Economic Alliance (ACEA), the National Aviation Research and Technology Park (NARTP), the South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA), and the surrounding municipalities of Egg Harbor, Galloway, and Hamilton Townships. Also on the agenda is what is happening in the rest of the county as well including the Town of Hammonton. This conversation is important while the State Plan is being updated and is scheduled for December 7. Joining the Office will be representation from the Business Action Center.

A total of four organizations provided comments on the SPC's Rule update. The proposed response and request for approval to publish in the NJ Register is on the agenda for today and details will be discussed at that time. One respondent to the Rule update submitted an OPRA request for all of the responses. The Office provided the documents to the Secretary's office for their response. Rules have been recodified to be included in the Department of State (15:30) from the DCA (5:85).

DOT has requested more time to review the language for warehouse model ordinances so we'd decided not to include it in the agenda. There is nothing that is time-sensitive so we felt it was appropriate to allow DOT more time to review. We will likely bring it back to the Commission at the December SPC meeting.

The Technical Advisory Committee members of the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (of which OPA is a member) sent out the draft Technical Memo, entitled Network and Facilities Issues and Analysis. This technical memorandum provides an overview of the SJTPO regional freight network, as well as a summarized list of freight issues and analyses identified to date by this planning effort. Additionally, the Stakeholder Advisory Committee members were sent a survey (which the Office responded to) to take regarding major concerns and priorities for transportation in their region.

Staff participated in the Coastal Coalition and NJ Internet for All Public Outreach meetings.

The Office participated in meetings related to

- NJTPA, DVRPC, SJTPO
- County Planners Association
- Coastal Coalition
- Rutgers MACH
- IAC
- NJ Coastal Resilience Collaborative Technical Assistance Coffee Chat

The Office has submitted all the materials that were remaining for the update to the website and OIT will begin building our site on the test server. Once this is completed, we will be able to see the site online and see how it functions and what is still needed.

Staff will be in attendance at the NJ League of Municipalities conference on November 14-16. The Executive Director will be presenting the State Plan update in a joint session with the New Jersey Planning Officials regarding how the State Plan can be utilized to provide guidance on good land use practices. The Office will also be assisting in staffing the Business Action Center booth.

The Office provided Commission members the proposed schedule for next year's meetings, which we are hoping to get approval in the December meeting. The Office received comments from Commissioner Harris. The proposed schedule currently has the PDC prior to the SPC on the same date. Commissioner Harris had some concern that the SPC would not have enough time to review items that are approved by the PDC. His recommendation is to move

the PDC to the same day as the PIC meeting or second/fourth Wednesday. If anyone has any conflicts, we will send a revised schedule and we will present at our next meeting along with the adoption of the newspapers.

## **STATE PLAN UPDATE**

Director Rendeiro said they have 6 of the 11 items on the list to be completed list by the end of the year have been accomplished and 5 are in process. The items completed include:

- All PDC meetings and Interagency Workgroup meetings are scheduled through the end of this year.
- All County Planners Association Statewide Subcommittee meetings are scheduled through the end of this year.
- Public Input Software has been procured.
- County Informational meetings held with 18 counties (all but Hunterdon, Ocean, and Salem).
- All 8 Stakeholder webinars have been completed.

Items in process include:

- Infrastructure Needs Assessment, Phase I
- Infrastructure Needs Assessment, Phase II
- Research
- Mapping Protocols
- Preliminary Plan document

Angela Knowles provided an overview of the webinar outcomes. Overall participation were on average of 75 participants per session. We've received positive feedback on the format and the conversation. The second round of our outreach efforts is a result of some of the polling questions which showed we needed more diversity. Some examples of the feedback we received were:

- The State Plan should be translated into multiple languages to reach more communities.
- Equity should be the number one goal and the State should consider doing a disparity study.
- The goals should be aspirational but also relatable so they can work towards decision making and improving quality of life.
- The State Plan needs to acknowledge the history and existence people who've been here for tens of thousands of years and collaborate with them in conversation on major land use decisions.
- Collaborations generally are key among communities and among technical resources and state agencies as well as include the youth in the outreach efforts.

Some other suggestions were:

- Focusing on the stewardships and long term solutions and integrating them into the fabric of the communities so they become part of the decision making.
- Assess the current State Plan to see if progress has been made.
- Attempt to reverse past inequities and restore the integrity of the natural environment and our communities by using nature base solutions and work towards being one hundred percent renewable.
- Focus on Arts, History and Agriculture.
- More inclusive workforce development strategy to help guide land use decisions.
- Look at neighboring states and how their workforce development strategies are written into their overall plan.
- Create metrics to make sure we're achieving our goals.
- Bolster our state agencies with reliable resources so they can assist the communities and coordinate with the counties to understand their regional planning efforts and invest in ongoing training for municipalities.

Director Rendeiro said all of the webinars are posted on the [www.publicinput.com/njstateplan](http://www.publicinput.com/njstateplan) website, as well as the results of the polling questions.

- In an effort to get better representation from underserved communities (and in particular underserved youth), a plan is being developed to hold an outreach program in the communities that have previously had limited representation. A discussion was held with our co-workers at the Department's Office of Faith-Based Initiatives. They are very much on board with working with us and provided us with some very appropriate organizations that they will connect us with. We are waiting to hear back from Kean University regarding a meeting date when Kean, OPA, and OFBI can convene. It is hoped that we can convene at least two in-person sessions.
- The Public Input has had over 8,600 views, over 200 survey responses, and over 200 subscribers. The survey responses have been slowly building.
- The next Interagency Workgroup is scheduled for November 9. The mapping tool and the INA update that will be presented to the PDC will be presented to that group at that time.
- Staff participated in the Bloustein virtual job fair and we received some interest. Bloustein will be reviewing the applicants first, then forwarding to the Office a list of possible candidates. Of concern, is that the candidate pool will likely drop by about 30% given that we cannot accept students that only have a student visa and not a work visa. There may be one candidate who can qualify for one of the full-time positions that are currently posted.
- Staff spoke with a candidate who will be applying for one of the open positions that we have for an Assistant Planner. He has experience in outreach to underserved communities, and in particular, underserved youth. He would be a great asset to the team.
- Comments were provided to the writing consultants on their first draft of the new goals. Comments will be discussed and a plan to distribute the first round of comments to the PDC and the Interagency Workgroup on November 2.
- The research consultant and the Office's GIS Specialist completed the task of mapping 62 layers of demographics and statistics developed by the research consultant. We are now developing JPEGs of the layers and a map package was sent to the mapping consultants to incorporate them into their mapping tool. The mapping tool will be demonstrated to the PDC today and the Interagency Workgroup on November 9. Demonstrations for county planners are being scheduled and a notification will be sent to them by November 2. This version does not yet include proposed mapping protocols for the new Plan. A meeting is currently being scheduled with NJDEP to discuss possible approaches to the protocols for late November or early December.
- The proposed Cross-Acceptance Manual is on the agenda for later today. There were two rounds of drafts and at the last PDC meeting, the Committee voted to move the approval to the full SPC. If approved, then we can forward it to the counties so they can get a jump start on reviewing the document. We are asking for a two-phased approval. The first, for today, does not include the dates. We will likely bring the dates back to the Commission in December when we have a better idea of when the preliminary plan may be ready.
- The Office participated in the BAC's quarterly EDO meetings to inform county economic development officials of the update.
- A message on the update of the Plan was sent to the State's business newsletter which is distributed to over 100,000 businesses. The Call to Action was to go to the public input website; that CTA resulted in a significant lift of views on the site.
- The Executive Director presented the update to the Central Jersey Transportation Forum.
- A joint session with the NJ Planning Officials is scheduled for the League Conference.
- Regular follow-up meetings with the consultants, and the counties, and training on the Public Input software continue.

Commissioner Santola said in the comments we didn't hear about affordability and redevelopment whether it's downtown or dead shopping malls or Merrill Lynch moving their headquarters. Obviously they are more granular and they are handled individually, but it's a big piece. Redevelopment of our cities and towns is a goal of the existing plan and he's interested if it was a topic on the affordability side.

Director Rendeiro said during the sessions, the interactive word cloud during the webinar, participants focused on affordability. We are going to be focusing in the Plan on redeveloping office parks and abandoned facilities. Redevelopment is going to be key in the updated Plan. We need to focus on urban areas but we also need to focus on the redevelopment of abandoned office parks but they are not always in urban areas. We're also discussing not numbering the goals as it gives an impression that one is more important than the other. The Commission needs to treat each goal equally. Director Rendeiro referred to Carlos Rodrigues to provide additional information.

Carlos Rodrigues said the goals have to be shown in a sequence but the sequence doesn't necessarily have to translate order of importance. With respect to the goals, we are thinking of starting with Equity and work from there. The State Plan has a hierarchy of centers which is great but we should recognize not every development that is out there fits neatly into the definitions of centers. There are centers of a different type. Maybe there needs to be a hybrid typology that goes beyond the traditional centers and provides policy.

Commissioner Santola said not that equity shouldn't be a stated goal but it's a table stake that weaves its way into every single conversation and every other goal that's part of the plan. Obviously, it's going to want to be stated and it's an element that might be conversational at least. Director Rendeiro agreed with Commissioner Santola.

Commissioner Angarone asked where in the process does the state agencies or the commission get to engage in the conversation and concept of what goes into the State Plan.

Director Rendeiro said almost immediately. Part of it is a mapping discussion and we will start introducing those concepts at the Interagency Workgroup meeting in November and December. The process will start before the end of the year.

Chairman Wright said the office has an ongoing stakeholder process and a team of consultants that are preparing a new preliminary plan for the Commission and the PDC to review. Once the Commission and the PDC receive the plan, it will be an opportunity for the PDC and SPC to weigh in. Director Rendeiro agreed with Chairman Wright.

Chairman Wright stated the preliminary plan will not go out for Cross-Acceptance until the Commission has approved it. Director Rendeiro agreed with Chairman Wright.

Commissioner Santola asked if the warehouse ordinance is a public document and has it been shared with the regulated community. Director Rendeiro said it has not yet. It is ordinance language drawn from the guidance.

Commissioner Somers said Highlands has their own recommendation for warehouse guidance and wanted to know if it were appropriate that it is pointed out as it will impact the 88 towns in the Highlands.

Director Rendeiro said the office is having the discussion with the DAG and the office will present once it is finalized.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **RESOLUTION 2023-19- Resolution of Approval of Cross-Acceptance Manual**

Director Rendeiro said the Cross-Acceptance Manual is largely procedural and it is taken directly from the Rules. It provides the procedures by which the counties or negotiating entities need to comply with the rules and municipalities. We incorporated comments received from the Commission. We are asking to get approval without dates as the release of the Preliminary Plan is not final. The reason we are seeking approval without dates is because we want to provide the Cross-Acceptance manual to the counties so they can familiarize themselves with the process and they can be better prepared for Cross-Acceptance. The PDC has seen it twice and we incorporated the changes and we are now seeking Commission approval.

Commissioner Angarone stated in the manual the expectation of state agencies to change their functional plans, programs, investments, grants-in-aid, regulations, proposed legislative initiatives, and public information activities to be consistent with the State Plan. At the very least, we have to make sure that there's recognition that we have statutory requirements and authorities and we frequently find ourselves not in full alignment with these things and the expectations are a little high. At a minimum, the statutory authorities should be recognized here while we make these statements.

Director Rendeiro stated the language was taken directly from the State Planning Act. We're not expecting one hundred percent alignment but it went it comes to incentivizing, we should we in a similar direction.

Commissioner Angarone said as it is a public document, the public should understand the complexity of the issue. It's primarily communicative and informational.

Director Rendeiro said no one expects any of our state agencies to violate their statutes. As we start talking about implementation, we need to acknowledge where those differences are and also acknowledge where those similarities are and try to align that way.

Commissioner Somers agreed with Commissioner Angarone. She stated some language to recognize the challenges should be added.

Director Rendeiro said we can add language recognizing the statutory responsibilities of each of our state agency partners where it's appropriate.

Commissioner Oakman said it would be helpful to protect in both directions. It should be made clear that if statutory obligations go against the goals, you have to address them, but the opposite also applies.

Director Rendeiro stated they will add some qualifying language recognizing state agency statutory responsibility.

Chairman Wright suggested we move forward with the resolution of the approval.

Director Rendeiro read the resolution.

The Resolution can be found at:

<https://nj.gov/state/planning/assets/docs/meeting-materials/spc/resolutions/certified-resolution-2023-19.pdf>

With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2023-19. The motion was made by Vice Chair McKenna and seconded by Jeffrey Oakman. Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote. Ayes: (12) Danielle Esser, Frank Gaffney, Susan Weber, Nick Angarone, Vice Chair McKenna, Keith Henderson, Elizabeth Terenik, Melanie Willoughby, Stephen Santola, Julia Somers, Jeffrey Oakman, Chairman Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (0). Resolution 2023-19 was approved.

#### **RESOLUTION 2023-20- Resolution of Approval to Post Rules for Adoption with Summary of Responses to Comments**

Director Rendeiro said the rules were put out for public comment in August. The public comment period ended on October 6. We received comments from four responders and we drafted the response to the comments. We made four changes to the rules based on the comments. Three added definitions, as the comments referred to the lack of definitions for climate change, climate resiliency, and environmental justice. We referred back to the DEP data and added the definitions in their documents. The fourth change was we added a reference to affordable housing in the INA. The response to all comments will be published in the next NJ Register for public viewing if approved today.

Commissioner Angarone suggested the office not defer to DEP but reference specific state documents. The statewide climate change resiliency strategy is an interagency council document, not a DEP document. There's a second sentence in the definition of climate resiliency that can be stricken as it's more descriptive. On the climate change definition, the office should use the Global Warming Response Act 80x50 report-specific definition in the glossary and provide the definition of environmental justice.

Director Rendeiro said the office will make the changes.

Director Rendeiro read the resolution.

The Resolution can be found at:

<https://nj.gov/state/planning/assets/docs/meeting-materials/spc/resolutions/certified-resolution-2023-20.pdf>

With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2023-20. The motion was made by Vice Chair McKenna and seconded by Danielle Esser. Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote. Ayes: (12) Danielle Esser, Frank Gaffney, Susan Weber, Nick Angarone, Vice Chair McKenna, Keith Henderson, Elizabeth Terenik, Melanie Willoughby, Stephen Santola, Julia Somers, Jeffrey Oakman, Chairman Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (0). Resolution 2023-20 was approved.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further comments from the Committee or the public, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Danielle Esser and seconded by Julia Somers. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**NEW JERSEY STATE PLANNING COMMISSION ATTENDEES**  
**DATE: NOVEMBER 1, 2023    TIME: 9:33 AM**

Adam Marshall, DAG  
Jason Kasler, NJPO  
Walter Lane, Somerset County  
Peter Kortright, Berge County  
Bob Kull, APA-NJ  
Angela Knowles, APA-NJ  
Carlos Rodrigues, APA-NJ  
Katrina McCarthy, Rowan University  
John Hasse, Rowan University  
Barbara Woolley-Dillon, DEP  
Kathryn Balitsos  
Ryan Conklin, Warren County  
Grant Lucking  
Katherine Fullerton, Hunterdon County  
Jim Hess  
Kyle Cruz, NJHMFA  
Larisa Paxton, OCPD  
Lauren Purdom, Cape May County  
Matt Baumgardner, DEP  
Elena Gable, Cumberland County  
Elena Thaxton, BPU  
Ruth Foster, DEP  
Jon Carnegie, Rutgers  
C. Helms, Bergen County