



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 January 5, 2022  
Zoom Video Conference**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Wright called the January 5, 2022 video conference of the New Jersey State Planning Commission (SPC) to order at 9:31 a.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present**

Nick Angarone, Designee for Shawn LaTourette, Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection  
Danielle Esser, Director of Governance, NJ Economic Development Authority  
Douglas Fisher, Secretary, Department of Agriculture  
Frank Gaffney, Designee for President Fiordaliso, Board of Public Utilities  
Bruce Harris, Municipal Member  
Shanel Robinson, County Commissioner Director, County Member (arrived at 10:15 a.m.)  
Stephen Santola, Public Member  
Andrew Swords, Designee for Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, Commissioner, Department of Transportation  
Sean Thompson, Designee for Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver, Commissioner, Department of Community Affairs  
Melanie Willoughby, Designee for Tahesha Way, Secretary of State, Department of State  
Thomas Wright, Chairman

**Others Present through Video conference**

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**

Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2021. Bruce Harris made the motion, and it was seconded by Stephen Santola. With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote: Ayes: (10) Danielle Esser, Frank Gaffney, Secretary Fisher, Andy Swords, Bruce Harris, Nick Angarone, Sean Thompson, Stephen Santola, Melanie Willoughby, Thomas Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (0). The December 1, 2021 minutes were approved.

## **CHAIR'S COMMENTS**

Chairman Wright welcomed the members. Chairman Wright said that he expects that the State Development and Redevelopment Plan update will be on the agenda for the State Planning Commission in 2022. Starting in just the next couple of weeks, Governor Murphy rolls out his State of the State and a Second Inaugural Address and we will move forward. Of course, we were all hopeful that we will be getting back in person sooner rather than later, but COVID seems to have other plans for us. We'll be awaiting direction in terms of when we can start to return back to in person meetings, making sure that everybody is safe. I just want to again express my thanks and appreciation and admiration to all the members of the Commission and the staff, the agencies and to Donna and her team for keeping moving forward, which puts us in a good position moving into 2022.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Rendeiro welcomed the State Planning Commission's new DAG, Levi Klinger-Christiansen to Commission. Congratulations to Matt Blake who was appointed to the Lambertville Planning Board. While Naomi Barnes is on staff as of November 8th, after 56 days, she now has the GIS software needed. We await one more access, GoToMyPC.

It is our understanding that the Governor has requested approval from the legislature for extensions to several of his executive orders and that the SPC Center designations are included in that request. We await notification but continue to work on the notification to the municipalities in the event the extension is not approved.

Since the December 1<sup>st</sup> SPC meeting:

- Fifteen municipalities (11 in Burlington County) began the Opportunities and Constraints Report (Brick, Bedminster, Beverly, Burlington City, Delanco, Edgewater Park, Florence, Willingboro, Palmyra, Riverton, Cinnaminson, Delran, Riverside, Stone Harbor, Commercial Township)
- Three municipalities have begun their MSAs (Asbury Park, Freehold Borough, Plumsted)
- One prepetition meeting is scheduled for January 11<sup>th</sup> (Dover)

Bedminster held a zoom visioning session on December 9<sup>th</sup> for the public to discuss their MSA. The Office received a draft of their MSA on December 1<sup>st</sup>, which we have forwarded to our state agency partners for their comments. Bedminster has a large tract of land (formerly the AT&T property) that is targeted for redevelopment.

Sparta sent to the Office documentation regarding a public hearing on the PEAC, Visioning and the MSA.

The Office held an information session for Burlington County participating municipalities. Questions were answered and the process clarified. One DOT issue surfaced that we were previously told by DOT was resolved and we are following up on that. One MSA remains outstanding, and we were told that there is local intent to submit the MSA once the new administration is sworn in. The first visioning session (Riverton) was held on December 14<sup>th</sup>; the second will be in Cinnaminson in January. The Office has prepared an information flyer for municipal use for the visioning sessions. A site visit was held for the “south of the Rancocas” municipalities and it was very informative; the second one, for the “north of the Rancocas” municipalities, is being scheduled.

A call was held with Barnegat representatives to discuss their expiration. Their Center has expired on December 7<sup>th</sup>, but the municipality is working toward re-endorsement. They have committed to a quick turnaround for their required documentation.

The Office is still working on a few outstanding items for Upper Township. It is still unknown whether those changes require substantive changes that must go back to the PIC. If they do, we anticipate presenting those changes at the January PIC; if not, it is anticipated that Upper will be presented to the full Commission for endorsement at the February meeting.

The office is also intending to bring Allentown to the PIC in January and we are hoping to bring Upper Township and Allentown to the February SPC meeting.

The Office received O&C feedback from DOT regarding Galloway, Vineland, and Middle Township.

Staff met with representatives of Somerset County to discuss a plan to move forward regarding re-endorsement of the Somerset Regional Center (Somerville, Bridgewater, and Raritan). While they don't expire until 2023, work will begin on the mapping protocols, and we will set up an informational session with the participating municipalities in the first quarter of 2022.

Current mapping discussions include Stafford, Barnegat, Brick, Upper, Galloway, Commercial, Middle, Vineland, Ocean City, Stone Harbor, Maurice River, 4 Wildwoods, and 12 Rt. 130 corridor municipalities.

Daniel's Law is now in effect. The NJ Office of GIS has redacted owner names from all hosted parcels and tax list database downloads, map services and applications. OPA will be replacing parcels on our online maps. We will keep the information for in-house use only.

Once we receive the official ok from the Governor's Office for the Rule update, the next step is a technical review by OAL. If we do not receive the official “go ahead” from the Governor's office this week, it will likely delay the Rule adoption.

OPA, FEMA, and Stafford held a meeting to discuss a resilience project that is a good opportunity for coordination as part of the resilience accelerator project. This project is a really good example of one that can benefit from coordination from all stakeholders from the federal, state, and local level. While the project may not fit in the training program, the project is one that is well deserving of attention and coordination, and we will continue to pursue the joint effort.

Ocean County and Somerset County have asked the Office to present the Resilience Guidance document to their CRS Users Group (Ocean) and their planning partners (Somerset). We had previously presented to Morris County CRS Users Group. We were asked to present the Resilience Guidance Document to ANJEC members at a January virtual training session.

I have begun to develop 2022 goals for the Office and the Commission. I am asking that each member submit recommendations to be included if you choose. Otherwise, I will likely continue our 2021 efforts in the areas of

Plan Endorsement, interagency coordination, technical assistance, policy and guidance development and outreach. I will submit the Plan to the Commission members as part of the required year-end report shortly for approval at the February meeting.

The third EJIC (Environmental Justice Interagency Council) met on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. DEP's self-assessment was presented. We received the format that they utilized to customize for our use in developing our self-assessment. Staff has been working on the Department of State's self-assessment. The Executive Director is the Secretary's designee in this process. As with the climate change effort, most of the related activities will be State Planning Commission responsibilities, but all divisions will be asked for input. A planning meeting has been scheduled for January 24<sup>th</sup> with DEP. Much of the response has been drafted on the items that are SPC related. Next step will be to go out to the remaining divisions within the Department of State which will not occur until after our meeting with DEP, likely late January, or early February.

The Office met with DEP for the 5<sup>th</sup> brainstorming session, with the next meeting scheduled for January 10<sup>th</sup>. While we have made headway on the process, and some limited progress on criteria, we still disagree on some. The Office presented to DEP a recommendation regarding the process, and we are finalizing it now.

Staff had a discussion with Sustainable Jersey that will initiate the next phase of our collaboration. This phase includes identifying climate change mitigation and action items and an effort to cross walk each organizations requirements to determine whether these actions can be included in our partnership. One easy modification to Sustainable Jersey's model was identified and the next step is to cross walk the remaining.

The Office listened to a presentation by Trenton Water Works on how they utilized EPA's CREAT product (Climate Resilience Evaluation and Awareness Tool) to evaluate current climate change risk and mitigation alternatives. While the product is a really good start in defining costs for mitigation alternatives, it could use some refinements, including coordination with FEMA and DEP on the tools and assumptions.

OPA participated in the Transit Village Task Force meeting to discuss Bernardsville Transit Village application. Concerns were raised about their commitment to create housing near the train station as well as the limited daily ridership at the station. DOT will follow up with the municipality. Also discussed was monitoring of existing Transit Villages.

The Executive Director attended a presentation of an undergraduate studio class entitled "Envisioning the Cultural and Ecological Landscape of Middlesex County". While there were some very creative ideas, there are also many that are implementable today and some will be incorporated in the updated Middlesex County Master Plan currently under development.

Staff listened in on a stakeholder call hosted by NJ Future and Clean Water Action on warehouse sprawl. Many good points were raised, but emotions ran high among a few of the commentators.

The Office is participating in a virtual launch of the new Transit Friendly Planning Guide on February 4<sup>th</sup>.

The Executive Director was invited to be a guest lecturer in a Planning and Land Use Administration Class at Bloustein in March.

Chairman Wright thanked the Director for the report and asked the members for any questions.

Commissioner Harris asked what kind of state approvals might be necessary for redevelopment of the AT&T site. The Director responded that if they're going to be designating it as a redevelopment area, they need DCA approval to do so. Commissioner Harris asked why they need a DCA approval. The Director responded that it is a requirement of the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law to make sure it meets the criteria in the statute.

Walter Lane, Planning Director from Somerset County, said that the County is working with them on a study of the use of the AT&T site using some Highlands Council funding. There are three different scenarios that are being considered for the use. Some of it involves tweaking existing zoning. It looks like they may want to include this as part of their planned growth areas or designated targeted growth area and they're planning to include it as part of their endorsement report to make sure it's eligible to receive various state incentives, including the Emerge Program, the business attraction and retention tax credit program. They're looking at a high-tech type of innovation campus or biotechnology campus based on market demand or more of a mixed-use campus; not really residential, maybe a hotel and some other types of uses. Some of it depends on whether AT&T stays on the property going forward because they don't own the property. It is owned by MetLife. There was a pretty detailed planning study done for the future reuse by the County in our supporting property investment work; we refined it and gave the Township some recommendations for zoning and master plan changes that were part of the visioning session they had for their plan endorsement municipal self-assessment.

With no further comments from the Commission or the public, Chairman Wright asked to move to business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Director Rendeiro said that she is happy to be working with Melanie and the Business Action Center. She has a very strong focus on small business assistance. She thought it was really important for the Commission members and the members of the public to hear what she offers to small businesses.

Director Rendeiro referred to Executive Director Melanie Willoughby for the presentation.

This presentation can be found at: <https://nj.gov/state/planning/assets/docs/meeting-materials/spc/materials/spc-materials-1-5-22-presentation.pdf>

Commissioner Santola asked if there is a Q&A on the website for COVID-19. Director Willoughby responded that because of the daily changes on the Covid-19 protocols, the website can give advice on where to go to look for and specific information including the CDC guidelines, the Governor's executive orders, etc.

Commissioner Santola commented that it might be something that Governor wants to mention as part of his daily, weekly or every other day information to small businesses. Director Willoughby thanked Commissioner Santola for his suggestion, and she will make a recommendation.

Andy Swords, NJDOT, thanked Director Willoughby for the presentation and said that he really did not know how much the scope of the activity of the Business Action Center. If there are other things that the Department of Transportation can do to assist, let me know. Director Willoughby commented that the NJ Business Center has worked with the procurement people at the NJDOT to help some businesses connect.

Director Rendeiro asked the Director how many calls a month the Business Action Center received. Director Willoughby responded that, since March 15, of 2020, when we set up the live chat, and in addition to our one 800 Number, we have responded to over 121,000 chats and phone calls from companies. Now that has slowed down because as the COVID numbers are reduced, it's really going back to just business, for the most part, as usual. We answer about 900 a week in chats and phone calls.

Director Willoughby said that our biggest problem is that we don't have a billboard out on the turnpike saying call us please. My big goal in life is that every small and large business knows we're here to help them. The more who know that we exist, the more calls we'll get, and the better I'll feel. It's really important to us that we help every business so that they don't get frustrated with government. As someone who has worked in and around government for decades, I really feel that it's so important for them to know that there is someone here to help.

Secretary Fisher said that if we had some success stories to show, we could find ourselves where folks could understand and replicate what took place. For instance, someone comes in with an inquiry like they want to start a small business. You put them here, you send them there; they got money for this, they got the training program for labor. I don't really know that. You could show examples. I don't know that there's specific assistance for an export business. That's a big thing; they show that this company setup trade overseas and I think would be really helpful so people could understand more about how they can access you, and what the ultimate result would be because they see examples that they could find themselves in that situation.

Director Willoughby said that is such an excellent point, and one that we're actually working on, coming up with those examples. I'll give you just a few. For instance, if you're going to start a business, you have to register with the State of New Jersey, that's the first thing we help to do. It can be very complicated to do that. You may want to register as a women owned business, a veteran owned business or a minority owned business, we help you register with the Department of Treasury in order to do that. Thirdly, you may very well want to know where there are dollars that you can get for financing. We can help set you up with the right place to go for the financing because there are many options for financing, not just your credit cards and your family. The next thing is mentoring. Let's say that you don't have a business plan, and you need one in order to go to a bank for money. We'll help you with structuring of a business plan and will connect you with the Small Business Development Centers, who are around the state who provide free counseling on how to write a business plan, a marketing plan, and how to present yourself to a bank.

If you decide that you want to expand your business, we help you find a site. We also have contacts all around the state so we can assist you in looking for a site. You're going to give us the facts of what you want and we're going to try to find that site for you. We may very well say, "Well hang on, what you want, the kind of people you want to hire, you may not want to be there". Or "that may not be a business-friendly municipality for you. Let's see if we can put you somewhere else". We will advise the business in that way.

When they have permitting issues, remaining issues in New Jersey is a problem. As a result, we have a lot of friends at DEP, and they are very helpful to us in helping to figure out what the problem is. For example, there was someone's permit who was sitting on someone's desk who had died at DEP we didn't know that's where it was, but we got it out from that desk and moved it to someone who could handle it. Curb cuts, that's another one where we work with the Department of Transportation, procurement is another area where it's very complicated to register to be able to become an authorized vendor for the state, municipality, county, federal government, or the Department of Transportation which has their own system. We will help walk you through that whole system and help to get you registered and trained to actually be able to get into it.

Secretary Fisher said that it's daunting to start a business New Jersey. You expressed it in terms all you know. We're a highly regulated state. On the other hand, we have great opportunity. What I'm trying to say is who walked in the door and who eventually we can point to as a success, that's what I mean by an example. In other words, person X walks in 2020 and you lead them through all these hoops and two years later lo and behold, we have a startup company over here in Shamong or wherever.

Director Willoughby said that you would like those to see the success stories from the people individually, who we actually we helped. Secretary Fisher responded that they don't have to say anything proprietary. Showing that government can, in fact, help lead the way and not be the obstacle that most people think they are. Director Willoughby agreed with Secretary Fisher.

Frank Gaffney, NJBPU thanked Director Willoughby for the presentation. He said that he wanted to thank the Director for being a resource for the BPU. I don't ever have a question that cannot be answered by the BAC. One came up yesterday, I sent up to the Business Action Center. It's where you want to go. We had a school and small business law that was passed and one of the questions that came up is where can we get the word out immediately? I thought of Melanie. Your staff and everyone there has been great. You're a great resource for New Jersey.

Director Willoughby commented that Erica Lockhart is the communications manager for BAC and that she heard everything and will make sure to incorporate Secretary Fisher's comments.

Director Rendeiro commented that for the record, Commissioner Robinson has joined the meeting.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further comments from the Commission or the public, Chair Wright asked for a motion to adjourn. Andy Swords made the motion, and it was seconded by Danielle Esser. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**NEW JERSEY STATE PLANNING COMMISSION ATTENDEES**  
**DATE: JANUARY 5, 2022     TIME: 9:31 AM**

Levi Klinger-Christiansen - DAG  
Walter Lane - Planning Director, Somerset County  
Meg Cavanagh – NJDEP  
Jonathan Sternesky – NJHMFA  
Jason Kasler – NJPO  
Erica L. Lockhart – NJBAC, Communications Specialist  
Jelena Lasko – NJDOT  
Ruth Foster – NJDEP  
Jack Turner –  
Brian McPeak -  
A. Soriano –