



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 July 7, 2021  
Zoom Video Conference**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Wright called the July 7, 2021 video conference of the New Jersey State Planning Commission (SPC) to order at 9:32 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**

Andrew Swords, Designee for Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, Commissioner, Department of Transportation  
Bruce Harris, Public Member  
Danielle Esser, Director of Governance, NJ Economic Development Authority  
Edward J. McKenna, Vice Chair, Public Member  
Elizabeth Terenik, Public Member  
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, Acting Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection  
Shanel Robinson, County Commissioner Director, County Member  
Sean Thompson, Designee for Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver, Commissioner, Department of Community Affairs  
Thomas Wright, Chairman

**Others Present**

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 with corrections of the June 2, 2021 meeting. Commissioner Harris made the motion, and it was seconded by Commissioner Robinson. With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote: Ayes: (12) Danielle Esser, Frank Gaffney, Monique Purcell, Andrew Swords, Nick Angarone, Bruce Harris, Edward McKenna, Sean Thompson, Shanel Robinson, Elizabeth Terenik, Melanie Willoughby, Thomas Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (0) The June 2, 2021 minutes were approved.

The Chair asked that we hear the presentation before the Chair's comments and the Executive Director report.

## **Presentation New Jersey Water Infrastructure Systems and The State Plan**

Director Rendeiro commented that this presentation is an opportunity to talk about what the water infrastructure looks like today. Dan Kennedy, NJ Future and a number of State holders are participating in a program called New Jersey Water Works.

The Director referred to Chris Sturm, Managing Director from NJ Future for the presentation. Director Rendeiro introduced Dan Kennedy, Senior Director for UTCA (Utility and Transportation Contractors Association) and Senior Director of Utility and Operations and Chairman of a local Planning board.

Ms. Sturm presented the efforts of NJ waterworks program.

Dan Kennedy expressed his strong support of the State Plan, State Planning Act and the foundation of it, which he always believed was the basis of state capital planning in supporting towns, counties and regional efforts to support good planning. Mr. Kennedy commented that he works for a trade association that represents companies in the state that build and rebuild infrastructure including water. We also build green infrastructures solutions in places like Newark, Hoboken and Camden. Although, the transition can be slow at times, the construction industry is starting to embrace green and gray solutions to the infrastructure challenges.

The last time that the alternatives assessment was done which is required by the State Planning Act was done on 2000 and approved by the commission by 2001. The purpose of the assessment is to make sure that the state plan is being developed and that you have a firm understanding of all the types of infrastructure that need to be in place. The importance of long-range capital planning as a management and fiscal planning tool to help local governments finance and bill infrastructure was highlighted in all these efforts, but as the years go on the importance of capital planning has shrunk in the state plan.

Mr. Kennedy commented that he's happy to hear that this State Planning Commission and that this administration are thinking of ways to strengthen and get back to those roots to complement the good work on helping local government do a good planning. The state plan assessment does not substitute for functional plans to state agencies and annual updated capital budgets in the municipal local governments are needed as well. Mr. Kennedy commented that state impact assessment would be good place for the State Planning Commission to start to focus as you figure out how and when a new version of state plan can be adopted.

Mr. Kennedy commented that data back from the 90s, data that is 30 years old, on water, sewer and the plan development assumed that smart growth development would reduce the cost of water and sewer assumed certain things and the savings under the plan conditions would be better for the State moving forward. What was underestimated was the condition of those assets in the ground in the places that we decided to be developed and redeveloped like the urban centers. The reality is that water is always underground and we've come to realize that the conditions of those assets is terrible in many places and the cost to replace them, which is required to support the private and public development in these places, is going to be tremendous.

The valuable roll for the State Planning Commissions efforts in the future is to get a better picture of those costs moving forward. Not to supplant the roll of DEP, BPU or DCA but to bring it to a more prominent position in State Government. There are still some sprawl-like concerns.

Mr. Kennedy added that UTCA support replacing and upgrading these water assets because of the economic vitality creates. These are good jobs mostly done with partners in the building trades. It is important that local utilities have stable financial systems.

Mr. Kennedy commented that Bill S-4011 sponsored by the Senate President that directs DEP to develop State water infrastructure investment plan; requires NJ Infrastructure Bank to publish additional information about water infrastructure projects; appropriates \$200,000 to NJ Infrastructure Bank.

Mr. Kennedy commented that local governments like the one he represents have a longer term view on what support comes from the state and federal government water infrastructure. This is a critical key and that could include better and more contemporary data from the SPC to do its needs assessment on water, sewer and storm water and some of the issues on resilience, sea level rise, increasing precipitation including climate change.

Chairman Wright thanked Chris Sturm and Dan Kennedy for their presentation.

Chairman Wright commented that the current state plan was based on a very different view when the suburban sprawl and disappearing of farmland were the concerns. Those issues have not been completely corrected but issues like climate change have become greater concerns for the commission.

Chairman Wright asked what the state of impact assessments is today. If there are any examples or models of places that are doing a better job on estimating what cost or savings in investments in terms of water infrastructure in the state. Mr. Kennedy responded that EPA has a financial infrastructure network support set up regionally that is helping other states like North Carolina do these projections. New Jersey is doing pretty well, and is ahead of the curve in some ways; behind the curve in others.

Chris Sturm commented that they have a new data dashboard where the water system financials on various aspects including on how many lead service lines were reported in the communities, how many were replaced in the past year, etc. This information can be found at [www.watercheck.org](http://www.watercheck.org).

Commissioner Terenik asked about the status of combined sewers projects. Chris Sturm responded that there are still twenty combined systems in New Jersey including Newark, Jersey City, Hoboken, Camden, etc. The cost of these projects is approximately \$3 billion statewide and that the implementation schedule is estimated to take from 20 to 40 years. Solutions range from smaller to large projects. She asked if the Infrastructure Bank plays a role.

Mr. Kennedy replied that The NJ Infrastructure Bank is integral to funding these projects. It is one of the best run programs in the country and we are working to help the NJIB provide more forgivable principal, since their programs are primarily loans.

Monique Purcell commented about a lack of infrastructure funding for wastewater in rural areas. One of the reasons that the USDA defines rural in the way that takes many NJ rural areas out of play because of the population density in the surrounding areas. Hoping to work these issues with some of the federal money.

Commissioner Robinson commented that this is a great direction to look at; the cost of doing business is going up, and at one point, we are paying more for a gallon of water than we are for a gallon of gas. Mr. Kennedy says that water delivery needs to be efficient and safe.

Commissioner Harris asked at what extend New Jersey will face a supply problem because of climate change.

Mr. Kennedy responded that the scientists who study this issue recommended expecting 50, hundred year and 500 year storms and more drought conditions. The projections on precipitation are not well known. Mr. Kennedy expressed as his professional opinion that New Jersey pays closer attention to sea level rise and not into precipitation. In terms of water supply, when there is precipitation stored more and with drought conditions being able to move it to areas in need. There will be feast and famine circumstances going forward.

Chelsea Brook from NJDEP, Water Resource Management commented that for the updated 2022 water supply master plan and that it will focus heavily on climate change and their impacts.

Chris Sturm offered the resource of the New Jersey Future to the SPC.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### Approval of Resolution 2021-12 - Resolution of Appreciation, Steven Karp

Chairman Wright asked Director Rendeiro to present the Resolution.

Director Rendeiro read the Resolution to the Commission (available on OPA's website).

Mr. Karp reflected on his time at the State. The Commission members expressed their wishes to Steven Karp on his retirement.

Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2021-12, Ed McKenna made the motion, and Thomas Wright seconded the motion. With no further discussions or questions, Chair Wright asked for a roll call vote: Ayes: (12) Danielle Esser, Frank Gaffney, Monique Purcell, Andrew Swords, Bruce Harris, Nick Angarone, Ed McKenna, Sean Thompson, Shanel Robinson, Elizabeth Terenik, Melanie Willoughby, Tom Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (0). The Resolution 2021-12 was approved.

Vice-Chair McKenna left the meeting.

### Approval of Resolution 2021-11 - Vernon Township Endorsement Recommendation

Director Rendeiro commented that Vernon Township is a unique town, that their land is different from other communities. They have been very proactive on doing the right thing in good land used and in compromising economic growth with environmental protection. Director Rendeiro referred to Matt Blake for the presentation.

This presentation can be found in the following link:  
[spc-materials-proposed-vernon-endorsement.pdf \(nj.gov\)](https://www.nj.gov/spc-materials-proposed-vernon-endorsement.pdf)

Chairman Wright referred to Mayor Howard Burrell from Vernon Township for comments.

Mayor Burrell expressed the importance of Vernon Township getting their plan endorsement approved. He commented that they have been working very hard to make the town a great place to live and asked the Commission to approve the endorsement for a better future.

Chairman Wright asked for comments or questions from the commission members.

Monique Purcell thanked Matt for the presentation and recognized the work and the efforts by Vernon Township to be present at the SPC.

With no further comments from the Commission or the public, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2021-11, Andy Swords made the motion, and Frank Gaffney seconded it. With no further discussions or

questions, Chair Wright asked for a roll call vote: Ayes: (11) Danielle Esser, Frank Gaffney, Monique Purcell, Andy Swords, Bruce Harris, Nick Angarone, Sean Thompson, Shanel Robinson, Melanie Willoughby, Elizabeth Terenik, Tom Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (0). The Resolution 2021-11 was approved.

Chairman Wright congratulated Vernon Township and Mayor Burrell for their hard work and for moving forward.

### **CHAIR'S COMMENTS**

Chairman Wright commented that he appreciates the program for endorsement is important, recognizes Steven Karp on his incredible work and the team working on the water issues. He hopes to continue to use this Commission as a sounding board for all these issues. Chairman Wright encouraged all the commissioners to think about issues that they are working on in their communities that can be brought to the Commission to help educate and provide a better understanding of statewide policy and development issues.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Office staff will be returning to the office sometime in July. All staff will be in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays. It is anticipated that a full, 5 day a week schedule may be in place by September.

We do not have information regarding when the Statehouse will open for public meetings to determine when the Commission can get back to in person meetings. We will continue to keep Commission members updated.

In the meantime, we are in the final approval stage of the hiring of Steven's replacement.

James Lewis, who sometimes represents DOT on the Commission is retiring as well at the end of July.

Congratulations go to Steven Gleeson who is now a proud dad to a new baby boy.

Nancy Wittenberg, Executive Director of the Pinelands Commission and former DEP Assistant Commissioner passed away June 24<sup>th</sup>. Susan Grogan, the Pinelands Commission Planning Director, has taken the role as Acting Executive Director. I forwarded to Susan condolences on behalf of the State Planning Commission and the Office of Planning Advocacy.

With the passing of the A-5820, it has been determined that the Center expiration date is now January 11, 2022.

The Office has sent out letters to the 76 communities that are affected by this date. To date, we have received more than half of those communities most of which are reaffirm their commitment to get into the process. Two declined and two "not sures".

We are also working on a list of recommendations to expedite the process for as many communities as possible. It is recognized that all will not make it through the process, but the further along we can get, the better position we will be in in the fall to determine whether we should request that additional 90 days. In the meantime, we ask all of our state agency partners that are participants in reviews of Plan Endorsement documents, to expedite the review of those documents.

Currently there are 4 to 5 towns working for endorsement - Morristown, Stafford, Upper, Allentown and Galloway.

There are 34 Municipal Self Assessments are in process.

Draft language for the rule update has been completed and reviewed by the DAG. DAG comments are currently being incorporated prior to forwarding the language to the Interagency workgroup. I hope that it will be presented to the PIC this month.

FEMA Bootcamp planning continues with the development of curriculum topics and potential speakers.

The Rutgers technical assistance program that provides longer term technical assistance continues through at least August depending on funding availability.

Staff participated in the last JCNERR Stakeholder meeting call to discuss how the watershed plan could work with Plan Endorsement. Follow up for the office includes a determination of what documents to send the team that are helpful in determining how certain stormwater actions identified through the watershed planning process could be eligible for credit toward the climate change planning element on a PIA.

In the 2020 year-end report, I talked about developing State Planning Commission policies around topics of statewide interest. I am beginning that effort in the next few weeks and I am recommending that we begin with warehouse sprawl as the first topic. As you know, S3688 was voted out of committee, but has not been presented to the full Senate. Regardless of the direction that Bill takes, it is appropriate for the State Planning Commission begin to address this issue. I will be meeting with staff this week to discuss an approach that will identify an approach that will include a situation statement, identification of stakeholders, and other aspects of policy development.

DEP's Interagency Council on Climate Change is scheduled to meet on July 13<sup>th</sup> to discuss the public comments and any proposed changes to the Climate Change Strategy. The third Environmental Justice Interagency Council (EJIC) meeting will be on Thursday, July 22, 2021.

OPA staff presented at NJDOT's Smart Growth I-team meeting June 29<sup>th</sup> with Sustainable Jersey on the new initiative to align actions that municipalities can take under Sustainable Jersey's program with the requirements of Plan Endorsement for towns under the State Development and Redevelopment Plan.

The Office has been invited by Wolfram Hoefler, Associate Professor and Director of the Center for Urban Environmental Sustainability at Rutgers to discuss a conference being sponsored by the German Federal Government to be held at Rutgers in October called, "The challenges of Climate Change for Spatial and Environmental Planning". He wanted to discuss the concept and potential speakers/authors with OPA, thinking that this might be a great opportunity to broadly communicate the innovative strategies of New Jersey in an international context. The conference, Transatlantic Climate Bridge, will foster a collaborative dialogue among planners, designers, scholars, public administration, and political decision makers from both sides of the Atlantic. Scholars from across Rutgers will contribute papers and discussion that highlight interdisciplinary approaches in New Jersey to addressing the environmental, economic, political, and social dimensions of planning in light of climate change. The conference will culminate in a set of reviewed papers that will become the basis of an edited book.

A recent study by US News and World Report has identified 10 NJ counties as ranking among the top 500 healthiest counties in the US, based on population health, equity, education, economy, housing food and nutrition, environment. public safety, community vitality and in infrastructure.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further comments from the Commission or the public, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to adjourn. Monique Purcell made the motion, and it was seconded by Sean Thompson. The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna Rendeiro, Secretary  
State Planning Commission  
Dated: September 1, 2021

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**NEW JERSEY STATE PLANNING COMMISSION ATTENDEES**  
**DATE: JULY 7, 2021      TIME: 9:32 AM**

Eric Reid - DAG  
Matt Baumgardner - NJDEP  
Walter Lane - AICP/PP Somerset County, Planning Board  
Jelena Lasko - NJDOT  
Rhyan Grech - Pinelands Preservation Alliance  
Meg Cavanagh - NJDEP  
Jessica Caldwell - Vernon, PP, AICP, LEED GA  
Dan Kennedy - UTCA, Senior Director  
Chris Sturm - NJ Future, Managing Director-Policy and Water  
Mark Villinger - Ocean County, PP,AICP, CFM  
Howard Burrell - Mayor, Vernon Township  
Chelsea Brook - NJDEP  
Sudhir Joshi - NJDOT  
Brianna Keys - Office of the Governor, Policy Advisor  
A. Rosario -