

**NEW JERSEY HIGHLANDS COUNCIL**  
**PLAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**CHAIR REPORT**  
**FOR THE MEETING OF FEBRUARY 23, 2006**

On February 23, 2006, the Plan Development Committee held a meeting at the Highlands Office in Chester. Notice of the meeting was provided to the public on the Highlands Council's web site. Council members present at the meeting included Committee Chair John Weingart, Jack Schrier, Ben Spinelli, and Debbie Pasquarelli. Council staff members present included Dante Di Pirro, Tom Borden, Steve Balzano, and Roger Keren.

The Committee discussed and reviewed the agenda items relating to four contracts in support of the ongoing development of the Regional Master Plan ("RMP"). Mr. Balzano provided an overview of the need for three contract modifications and one new contract. The Committee members had been provided with scopes of work for these contracts. The first proposed contract amendment relates to the contract with VERTICES, LLC, in the amount of \$10,000, to perform data management services in support of the development of the RMP. It was recommended that the Council approve a modification of this contract, in the amount of \$35,600, to develop a web-based query tool for Preservation Area and Planning Area determinations by block and lot and street address and a web-based interactive system for the public to provide information to the Highlands Council on historic and scenic information. Mr. Keren provided the Committee with a presentation of the similar web-based applications prepared by VERTICES as a demonstration of the possible uses of these interfaces to provide public access to information developed by the Highlands Council.

Mr. Balzano then briefed the Committee on the proposed modification of the existing contract with Hatch Mott MacDonald ("HMM") to perform an analysis of wastewater treatment capacity in the Highlands Region. He advised that staff has been very pleased by HMM's progress to date to map sewer service areas and that this contract and many other contracts were specifically designed to be expanded as additional work was identified. It was recommended that the Highlands Council amend the existing contract, in the amount of \$60,000, to have HMM continue the additional work required in support of the utility capacity analysis.

The existing contract with the National Center for Neighborhood and Brownfield Redevelopment ("NCNBR") at Rutgers University was also recommended for modification. The existing contract, in the amount of \$65,000, is providing for the ongoing development of a build-out analysis for the Highlands Region. Mr. Balzano recommended a modification to the existing contract, in an amount not to exceed \$14,100, in order to have NCNBR provide additional technical and planning assistance relating to spatial data and other data sets being prepared for the RMP.

Mr. Balzano then introduced a proposed new contract with the United States Army Corps of Engineers to conduct an over-flight of the Highlands Region to conduct lidar mapping of the slope and terrain of the Region. The end result would be an updated and accurate digital steep slope model for the Highlands. In response to questions from Committee members regarding the use of this data, Mr. Balzano discussed the use of the model to have a detailed view of drainage areas as well as steep

slope maps that can be used for site plan review at the local planning board level. Committee members discussed the fact that at least two of the seven counties had already obtained lidar data through their own planning efforts. Mr. Balzano stressed the need to perform an overflight of the entire Highlands Region in order to obtain a uniform set of data. He also advised that the flights would be conducted before the end of April and would capture areas outside of the Highlands Region in order to capture the all of the drainage areas impacting the Highlands Region. The proposed contract would not exceed \$302,000 and would require that the Highlands Council obtain additional financial support from other federal partners.

The Committee discussed the benefits of the recommended four contracts and the need to obtain this additional data and technical support in order to advance the development of the RMP. The Committee sought public comment on the proposed contracts. Thereafter, the Committee came to a consensus to recommend that the four proposed contracts be approved by the full Highlands Council.

Mr. Balzano advised the Committee that the staff were developing a comprehensive approach to promote the conservation of land through State funding sources, such as Green Acres and SADC, the developing TDR program, and other funding opportunities. Mr. Balzano sought and received approval of the Committee to publish a request for qualifications to advance the development of contact program to provide support to expedite the appraisal and processing time for these acquisition programs.

Mr. Weingart discussed the need to develop a summary of the various comments received on the draft Scoping Document. He was advised by staff that numerous comments had been received on the Scoping Document and that the staff would prepare a summary of these comments and would also compile the comments received by NJDEP on the proposed Highlands rules. Mr. Weingart also requested that the next meeting the Plan Development Committee included an updated timetable for the ongoing development of the RMP. After opening the meeting for any additional public comment, the Committee adjourned.