

SOMERSET COUNTY BOARD OF CHOSEN FREEHOLDERS
SUBMISSION OF A PETITION FOR THE HIGHLANDS COUNCIL
PLAN CONFORMANCE

WHEREAS, the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act (Highlands Act), N.J.S.A. 13:20-1 et seq., finds and declares that protection of the New Jersey Highlands is an issue of State level importance because of its vital link to the future of the State's drinking water supplies and other key natural resources; and

WHEREAS, the Highlands Act creates a coordinated land use planning system requiring the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council (Highlands Council) to prepare and adopt a Regional Master Plan for the Highlands Region and requiring that within nine to 15 months after September 8, 2008, each county and municipality located wholly or partially in the Preservation Area must submit a Petition for Plan Conformance to the Highlands Council for that portion of its jurisdiction lying within the Preservation Area; and

WHEREAS, the Highlands Act specifies that conformance with the Regional Master Plan (Plan Conformance) requires revisions to county master plans, a Highlands environmental resource inventory, self assessment report, amended land development regulations and regulations governing the use of county land and buildings to align them with the goals, requirements, and provisions of the Regional Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders previously filed a Notice of Intent for Plan Conformance at its regularly convened meeting of February 17, 2009 and the Highlands Council's Plan Conformance Guidelines require that for jurisdictions with any lands in the Preservation Area to submit all the required Plan Conformance documents no later than December 8, 2009; and

WHEREAS, the Somerset County Planning Board will be acting on revisions to the County Master Plan, Highlands environmental resource inventory and the self assessment checklist prior to the Plan Conformance deadline; and

WHEREAS, the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders have authority over the land development review regulations and the regulations governing the use of County land and buildings under its jurisdiction that lie within the Highlands Region Preservation Area located wholly in a portion of The Township of Bedminster as defined by the Highlands Act; and

WHEREAS, the County of Somerset does not own or operate any land or buildings in the Preservation Area in the Township of Bedminster except for the right of way associated with Pottersville Road, County Route 512, and three drainage conveyance structure (C1303, C1304 and D1301) which would be covered under the maintenance and public safety exemptions of the Highlands Act; and

WHEREAS, the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders believes that it is in the best interest of the County of Somerset to conform to the Regional Master Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders hereby submits the mandatory revisions to County land development regulations (exhibit A) to the Highlands Council for any comments and recommendations prior to formally adopting the same for all lands lying within the Preservation Area and requests a Waiver for adoption of the model Highlands Regulations Governing the Use of County Land and Buildings; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Petition of Plan Conformance is limited to the Preservation Area and is not binding with respect to lands within the Planning Area. within the County of Somerset; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of the this Resolution be forward the Highlands Council Somerset County Planning Board and the Township of Bedminster, Somerset County.

I, Richard E. Williams, Clerk/Administrator of the Board of Chosen Freeholders of the County of Somerset in the State of New Jersey, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a Resolution adopted by said Board of Chosen Freeholders at its regularly convened meeting of December 1, 2009.



Richard E. Williams, Clerk/Administrator

Approved as to Form and Legality
Somerset County Counsel

By: 
Thomas C. Miller