

Borough of Somerville

Mayor: Brian Gallagher

Council President: Jane Kobuta **Clerk Administrator:** Kevin Sluka

Borough Council: Philip Decker ♦ Thompson Mitchell ♦ Amanda O'Neill
Dennis Sullivan ♦ Rob Wilson

May 30, 2013

JUN 19 2013 PM 3:58

Dr. Gerry Scharfenberger, Executive Director,
NJ Department of State, Office for Planning Advocacy
P.O. Box 820
225 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0820

Re: Somerset Regional Center Plan Endorsement –Borough of Somerville
Waiver Request for Natural Resource Protection Ordinance; Community Facilities

Dear Dr. Scharfenberger,

The Borough of Somerville is committed to completing the Plan Endorsement process as documented by the substantial planning documentation submitted to date to fulfill many of the Plan Endorsement Action Plan requirements. To complete the Plan Endorsement process for the Somerset Regional Center, the Borough of Somerville will be entering into a shared service agreement with the Regional Center Partnership of Somerset County for funding assistance to complete the remaining tasks in the latest Plan Endorsement Action Plan for the Borough of Somerville, which include preparation and adoption of the Borough's Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) and a riparian corridor protection ordinance which the Borough feels are very relevant to the objectives of the Borough Master Plan, the Regional Center Strategic Master Plan and the State Strategic Plan.

As discussed at the April 5 meeting between Barry Ableman of your office, Somerset County planning staff and the planners for the three Regional Center municipalities, there are certain Action Plan items which the Borough of Somerville finds are not applicable to our community which the Borough respectfully requests be waived from Action Plan Item D2 –adoption of a suite of resource conservation ordinances related to the WQMP for the following reasons:

- **Steep Slopes Ordinance** Unlike neighboring Bridgewater Township which has steep slopes and ridges due to the presence of the Watchung Mountains, Somerville Borough is virtually completely flat.
- **Water Conservation** Unlike municipalities within the Highlands Region, Somerville Borough is not in a HUC watershed akin to the Highlands region and in fact has been the subject of flooding along the Raritan River and the Peters Brook, a tributary of the Raritan River. Somerville Borough has also been working with the NJ Water Supply Authority to educate residents about water conservation and ground water replenishment by hosting rain barrel building workshops, rain garden demonstration projects and the Peters Brook Residential Rain Barrel Rebate Pilot Program administered by the Regional Center Partnership and funded by NJWSA.
- **Wellhead Protection** There are no wellhead protection areas in the Borough of Somerville.

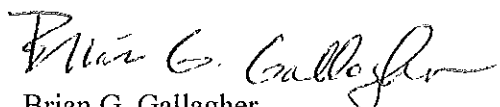
Municipal Offices ♦ 25 West End Avenue ♦ Somerville, New Jersey 08876 ♦
Phone (908) 725-2300 ♦ Fax (908) 725-2859 www.somervillenj.org

Action Plan Item C1 Community Facilities

Also discussed at the April 5 meeting was Action Plan Item C1 –Community Facilities which is concerned with the local School Board of Education's Five-Year Facilities Plan. At the meeting it was noted that the Borough of Somerville as a community is almost completely built out. Somerville has one elementary school that serves Borough residents; recently Somerville Board of Education completed the reconstruction of its Middle School; both the Middle School and High School are located within the Borough of Somerville and serve students from two municipalities-Somerville and Branchburg Township. It is my understanding that the Somerville Board of Education has no plans to construct any new schools in the Borough of Somerville.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to working with your office and the Regional Center Partnership to complete this important process

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brian G. Gallagher".

Brian G. Gallagher
Mayor

c: Somerville Borough Council
Dr. Timothy Purnell, Superintendent of Schools; Somerville School District 51 W Cliff St,
Somerville, NJ 08876
Michael Cole; Michael Cole Associates
James Ruggieri, Somerset County Planning Board; 20 Grove St., PO Box 3000, Somerville, NJ
08876