



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
NEW JERSEY STATE PLANNING COMMISSION
P.O. Box 820
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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 March 3, 2021
Zoom Video Conference**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Wright called the March 3, 2021 video conference of the New Jersey State Planning Commission (SPC) to order at 9:31 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

Bruce Harris, Public Member
Danielle Esser, Deputy Chief of Staff, NJ Economic Development Authority
Douglas Fisher, Secretary, Department of Agriculture
Edward J. McKenna, Public Member
James Lewis, Designee for Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, Commissioner, Department of Transportation
Melanie Willoughby, Designee for Tahesha Way, Secretary of State, Department of State (arrived at 9:36)
Nick Angarone, Designee for Shawn LaTourette, Acting Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection
Sam Kaplan, Designee for President, Board of Public Utilities
Sean Thompson, Designee for Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver, 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 February 3, 2021 meeting. Edward McKenna made the motion, and it was seconded by Bruce Harris. With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote: Ayes: (10) Danielle Esser, Sam Kaplan, Secretary Fisher, James Lewis, Bruce Harris, Nick Angarone, Edward McKenna, Sean Thompson, Melanie Willoughby, Thomas Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (0). The February 3, 2021 minutes were approved.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Chairman Wright commented that reading through the Energy proposal, he was reminded 20 years back when there were early efforts at the SPC along with NJ Future and League of Municipalities trying to create a pathway for local officials to create more sustainable planning and guidelines for communities in New Jersey to reduce carbon emissions, to live with climate change, adapt to sea level rise and all of the current issues.

Chairman Wright commented that he is very excited to have the opportunity to take another step forward in terms of bringing these efforts together, which have so many synergies, more closely into alignment.

Over 2021 and into the future, Chairman Wright would like to achieve two overarching priorities. One is to prepare for climate change by doing everything to reduce carbon emission and, second, to adapt to the changing environment around us whether it is sea level rise, frequent storms or draught.

Chairman Wright commented that another important issue for the SPC to address is to undo the legacy of segregation and racism in land use planning in creating more diverse communities that will provide opportunities to all people in which to live and participate..

Chairman Wright thanked Donna and the staff, welcomed Sustainable Jersey and stated that he is looking forward to working with them.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Rendeiro spoke. The Office and the DAG have been notified that Hazlet Township has appealed the SPC's decision in the Holmdel matter. I am currently working with the DAG on the matter and there is no action needed from the Commission at this point.

All staff continues to work from home. Since Vinn White's departure, I've had one call with his original replacement, Preethy Thangaraj. Since that call, Preethy has been replaced by Brianna Keys. My first call with her is on March 10th.

Since the February 3rd SPC meeting:

One Municipal Self Assessment was completed (Galloway)

One municipality decided not to engage (Elmer)

The Office met with members of the governing body in **Lawrence Township (Cumberland County)** to discuss the Township's goals and issues. They have significant septic issues and just updated their first Master Plan re-examination since 2003. They are a candidate for a USDA SEARCH grant for rural wastewater feasibility. They will likely come in for Plan Endorsement.

Biennial Reviews

We continue to work with Lakewood on their biennial review and their request for an additional industrial node. We anticipate being able to bring the proposal to the March PIC as the concerns identified by neighboring Brick are likely to be resolved.

Work continues with our state agency partners regarding Woolwich's request to unwind their TDR program. The Office has reached out to all known agencies with a possible interest in the matter. Responses have been received by some and we await others. We will be reaching out to Woolwich by the end of the week for a status call. There are major concerns over contracts Woolwich entered into with state agencies in order to get state funding and what obligations that funding committed Woolwich to. This effort is a major effort with significant implications. Additionally, there is a pending lawsuit against the State that should be dismissed. We will continue to coordinate the response as part of Woolwich's biennial review process.

In addition, Newton and Toms River have begun their biennial reviews.

Map Updates

The Office has not yet received the Petition for the map update in February for Lower Alloway's Creek in connection with the NJ wind port project. We are hopeful that we will receive the Petition shortly. It is anticipated that the subject site will be used for future manufacturing of wind turbine part production. There does not appear, at least initially, to be any obstacles in granting the map amendment. We stand ready to respond quickly.

Rule Update

In preparation for the SPC rule update, the Office held three internal meetings, an interagency meeting, and several with planning partners. The Office developed a timeline that would bring the update to mid fall, at the earliest, but more likely before the end of the year. A list of potential topics to address has been developed and discussed at the interagency meeting. We have asked our state agency partners for comments by mid to end of March and we will begin to draft language in March. I will forward the documentation discussed with the interagency group to the Commissioners for their input as well during this month. As more structure is developed around both the topics and the language, the Office will present to the PIC, then the SPC for more formalized input and approval. It is anticipated that the formal public comment period will be sometime in the summer.

Technical Assistance

Initial planning is underway for the first of the next two initiatives related to resiliency planning. The first is a FEMA concept of a resiliency bootcamp. Planning is underway and a steering committee is being convened to determine content. An MOU may be required. It is anticipated that the program can be presented to municipalities in the fourth quarter of this year. It is hopeful that some of the curriculum can be held in person.

The Rutgers Climate Change and Resiliency Center (CCRC) program continues with the effort beginning to reach out to targeted municipalities to determine interest. OPA staff has identified targeted municipalities and has begun that outreach.

The Office has received positive response from the Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences (SEBS) School regarding our proposal to providing technical assistance to municipalities through their planning programs. A call is scheduled for next week to discuss details.

Interagency Coordination

Continuing the coordination effort with the Highlands Council, the guidance document to assist municipalities in determining whether to go through Plan Endorsement or the Highlands Conformance process and the

announcement to the municipalities regarding the SPC endorsement of the HMP and its related coordination effort have been published. As you may recall, a mapping project has been completed to coordinate the State Plan Policy Map with the Highlands map to ensure that the data is consistent between both groups. We recently commented on Washington Township's petition for Plan Conformance which the Highlands Council accepted and is working with the Office in implementing our suggestions.

You will be hearing later in this meeting the proposal for the Sustainable Jersey project.

The draft PIA template was sent to State agencies for one final round of comments before being presented to the PIC in March. If approved, the PIC should only have to address new items that are specific to a municipality going forward, expediting the formal review and approval process. The development of the PE checklist is also near completion. The purpose of the checklist is to provide municipalities with a guide to the requirements of PE and is the result of the new PE Guidelines. The final draft will be forwarded to state agencies that are regularly part of the PE process.

Staff, Chairman Wright and Commissioner Terenik who works at ACDEVCO met to discuss Atlantic City development plan and to discuss the diversification of industry into the blue economy. We are reviewing the current Master Plan to offer suggestions, in light of the upcoming DEP rule changes. We stand at the ready to assist if asked.

The Office jointly held three meetings with all 12 municipalities in the Burlington County Route 130 Corridor Plan. The MSA process is nearly completed for all 12 municipalities and the purpose of the calls was to answer any questions that the municipalities may have. It was a productive process as much of the connections became evident to all participants. It is Burlington County's goal to be one of the first regional endorsements that the SPC can endorse with the new regional endorsement guidelines approved in 2020. There are two other counties interested in the same goal.

The second Environmental Justice Interagency Council meeting was held by DEP. I represent both the Secretary of State and the State Planning Commission on the Council. Presented on that call was DEP's progress to date and upcoming plans for DEP to present their internal assessment as a model for other departments to follow. EJ and implicit bias training plans were discussed. The Department of State's second individual meeting was rescheduled to March 4th, after which an outline of the proposed assessment will be developed.

I participated in a webinar on March 2nd entitled "Age Friendly New Jersey Leadership Forum", hosted by AARP to discuss how to best plan for ensuring quality of life to aging New Jerseyans. I believe this is an area that the SPC can play a big role in. Many on the call recognized the integral role land use and zoning plays in this effort. The Governor spoke and announced that he is signing an executive order that creates an advisory council to address this issue.

I will be a guest lecturer at a Bloustein Land Use and Planning Administration Class on March 3rd.

The Office continues to participate in the Climate Change and Environmental Justice Interagency Councils, DEP's NJPACT initiative, the Highlands Economic Development Plan Development, and numerous state, regional and local planning entities.

Legislation/Executive Orders of Interest

S2607/A2785 -- Requires land use plan element of municipal master plan to include climate change related hazard vulnerability assessment, signed into law, February 4th. The Office supports this bill.

S2605/A4554 - Directs BPU to establish utility-scale solar energy development program; modifies State's renewable energy portfolio standards. Introduced into the Assembly; currently in Senate Committee.

A3352 – Requires all newly constructed warehouses to be solar-ready buildings. Reported out of Committee – The Office supports this bill.

Outreach and Advocacy Activities

The new OPA newsletter was distributed. A total of 219 people received the email with an open percentage was approximately 41% and most had clicked through the many of the links. A follow up email was sent to approximately 136 people that we believe had the newsletter delivered to their junk mail and that increased the open percentage. Only 5 unsubscribed. Staff has begun the framework for the next edition and the mailing list continues to be refined.

Chairman wright spoke. As Donna mentioned we have been informed that we may face a lawsuit over the Holmdel map amendment and I think that the OPA staff, the PIC and the SPC did a terrific job.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Wright referred to Randy Solomon, Executive Director of Sustainable Jersey for an introduction.

Mr. Solomon spoke. “In part, Sustainable Jersey was inspired by the SPC when the efforts to push the State Plan to implement and utilize the authority of the agencies was a great challenge. SJ came around that same time with that idea. There is a tremendous amount of authority that exists at a local level and there are a lot of people who want to do the right thing. Part of our success is because of the partnership with State agencies, in particular with the NJDEP and the BPU, who provided funds to help create SJ. SJ has a history of collaborating with State agencies to make it easier for municipalities to have access to agency resources, to do the right thing and to find ways to reward them. I think that this proposed partnership with the OPA is the next step to a great opportunity”.

Mr. Solomon also commented that one of the things that municipalities often struggle with is navigating through all the different programs and things that State Government; State agencies often don’t take the time that they need to align their work with each other and to make it easier for the local Governments and the public to participate.

Chairman Wright asked Meghan Wren to present the SJ proposal.

Meghan commented that the office of Planning Advocacy and Sustainable Jersey have complementary missions in that both support municipalities in creating sustainable and resilient communities with the greatest equity and efficiency. The two organizations created a staff working group which conducted a careful review of the State Planning Commission’s Plan Endorsement process and requirements and compared them with Sustainable Jersey’s 150 Actions. A key goal behind this comparison is to minimize duplication of efforts by municipalities as they work on sustainability and provide them with unified guidance to support their undertaking additional meaningful actions. The working group found that, though there is shared intent, the complexity, differences in approach and process result in a nonlinear relationship between the two programs.

Meghan commented that there are a range of ideas to align the recommendations made to municipalities on sustainability. Some are easy and are even being initiated now, while others will require additional consideration, review, and amendments to current processes for each organization. The options would recognize a municipality’s efforts and streamline the certification/endorsement process for them in ways that would eliminate duplication of efforts, remove administrative obstacles, and provide enticements/inducements for reaching higher standards of sustainability.

This presentation can be found in the following link: <https://nj.gov/state/planning/assets/docs/meeting-materials/spc/spc-sj-proposal-and-pe-community-list-and-crosswalk3-1-21-2021-3-3.pdf>

Director Rendeiro thanked Meghan and Anne for all the work done. She also commented that as part of the presentation, the crosswalk sheet illustrates, how detailed the effort was.

As a general rule there were very basic items. A short-term item is fairly easy to achieve. One short-term item is to determine whether an MOU is necessary.

Director Rendeiro commented that this will be a great opportunity to reduce the lift for municipalities that are involved in both processes. While OPA will continue to review the items, for compliance with PE Guidelines, municipalities need to submit only once. OPA will not rely on SJ approval, the office will make sure to follow the normal process to ensure that the submission complies with PE Guidelines.

Chairman Wright agreed with Director Rendeiro and applauded the idea of the crosswalk as a good concept.

Commissioner Harris congratulated Donna and the team on getting the work done and hopes to achieve the result of getting more municipalities to participate in the Endorsement process.

Danielle Esser asked what is the Commission been asked to approve?

Director Rendeiro read Resolution 2021-07, which states that the SPC approves the partnership, allows the continuation of the planning and the implementation of the program and if it is determined that an MOU is needed, that MOU will be brought back to the Commission.

Director Rendeiro commented that the SPC requirements are not going to change as a result of this program and that it is important to understand that a municipality will only need to submit once. OOA, as well as Sustainable Jersey, will review to make sure everything complies with the individual requirements.

Director Rendeiro commented that the PE check list is being updated to include a column called Sustainable Jersey action to identify if something is required for Sustainable Jersey certification.

Chairman Wright asked Director Rendeiro to read the Resolution to the commission.

Director Rendeiro read the Resolution - link below: <https://nj.gov/state/planning/assets/docs/meeting-materials/spc/resolutions/spc-certified-resolution-2021-07-2021-3-3.pdf>

Chairman Wright asked to amend the Resolution to be more specific.

Sean Thompson asked if there is any action or a further consideration required from SJ Board or do we have everything to act on?

Director Rendeiro commented that everything proposed today is within the authority of Randy Solomon and that whatever is required to go in front of their Board, will be presented to their Board in due course

Anne Heasley agreed with Director Rendeiro. She commented that on having the ability to implement the short-term commitments and exploring the feasibility of the longer term items will be the best approach.

Danielle Esser commented that this is a forward look and appreciated the effort.

Commissioner McKenna agreed with Commissioner Esser.

Nick Angarone commented that NJDEP is supporting SJ and the Resolution.

Nick commented that in reference to the recommendations for the short term actions for SJ on the Water Conservation Ordinance, he wants to make a very specific requirement and to allow DEP to perform the analysis over the next six months to a year.

Anne Heasley commented that the idea is to take the time to get into the finer details of what has been asked and to use the language from the State Agencies. Nick Angarone commented that the misunderstanding was that he read that SJ already had a water conservation ordinance. Nick expressed that Anne's clarification addressed the issue.

Chairman Wright asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2021-07, Bruce Harris made the motion, and it was seconded by Edward McKenna. With no further discussions or questions, Chair Wright asked for a roll call vote: Ayes: (10) Danielle Esser, Sam Kaplan, Secretary Fisher, James Lewis, Bruce Harris, Nick Angarone, Edward McKenna, Sean Thompson, Melanie Willoughby, Tom Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (0).
The Resolution 2021-07 was approved.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further comments from the Commission or the public, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to adjourn. Edward McKenna made the motion, and it was seconded by Bruce Harris. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

ATTACHMENT A
NEW JERSEY STATE PLANNING COMMISSION ATTENDEES
DATE: MARCH 3, 2021 TIME: 9:31 AM

Steven Gleeson - DAG
Randall Solomon - Sustainable Jersey
Anne Heasley - Sustainable Jersey
Susan Weber - NJDOT
Meg Cavanagh – NJDEP
Jason Kasler - NJPO
Oriana Holmes-Price - Rutgers Univ. Student
Jonathan Sternesky - HMFA
Matt Baumgardner - NJDEP
Walter Lane - Somerset County Planning Board
Helanie Barr - NJDEP
Gina Lugo - NJDEP
Regine Delcy - Mercer County
Lt. Helen Hart-Magobet - Negro Woman Warriors
Anthony Soriano - Morris County
Theresa Ziegler
Ashley Kerr
Bonnie Flynn
Ernie Zebro