



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 February 3, 2021
Zoom Video Conference**

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Wright called the February 3, 2021 video conference of the New Jersey State Planning Commission (SPC) to order at 9:30 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
Nick Angarone, Designee for Shawn Latourette, Acting Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection
Danielle Esser, Deputy Chief of Staff, NJ Economic Development Authority (arrived at 9:35 am)
Douglas Fisher, Secretary, Department of Agriculture
Elizabeth Terenik, Public Member
Joseph Fiordaliso, President, Board of Public Utilities
Sean Thompson, Designee for Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver, Department of Community Affairs
Melanie Willoughby, Designee for Tahesha Way, Secretary of State, Department of State
Shanel Robinson, County Commissioner Director, County Member
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 January 6, 2021 meeting. Shanel Robinson made the motion, and it was seconded by President Fiordaliso. With no further discussion or questions, Chairman Wright asked for a roll call vote: Ayes: (11) Danielle Esser, President Fiordaliso, Secretary Fisher, Andrew Swords, Bruce Harris, Nick Angarone, Sean Thompson, Shanel Robinson, Melanie Willoughby, Elizabeth Terenik, Thomas Wright. Nays: (0). Abstains: (0). The January 6, 2021 minutes were approved.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Chairman Wright thanked President Fiordaliso and his staff for the upcoming NJBPU presentation on the Energy Master Plan. Chairman Wright also thanked Director Donna and the staff for their dedication and hard work.

Chairman Wright commented that while his last month's comments were about celebrating our democracy, we were unaware of what was about to happen at the Capitol later that day. As we take the Pledge of Allegiance, it is important to remind everyone how important the work of this Commission is toward building trust and open transparent government and public administration.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Rendeiro spoke. All staff continues to work from home. Vinn White, the SPC's liaison with the Governor's office, has taken a position in Washington. Our new liaison is Preethy Thangaraj. The first call is with Preethy is February 10th.

Expiring Center Redesignation

Since the January SPC meeting:

- One Opportunities and Constraints Report was completed (Morristown)
- A reminder letter was sent to PE communities stating that while no expiration date has been determined, no additional extensions are anticipated.
 - The Office received a response from approximately 50% (35 out of 67 letters sent)
 - Thirty one reconfirmed their commitment
 - Three are reconsidering prior declines and will likely be participating (Cape May Point (Cape May County), Lawrence (Cumberland) and Elmer (Salem))
 - One declined a previous commitment (Montague in Sussex)

There are three municipalities that are almost ready to come in front of the Commission.

- 17 municipalities have decided not to pursue Plan Endorsement
- 42 municipalities are further along in the process:
 - 36 Municipal Self Assessments are in process (12 in Burlington County Route 130 Corridor, Plumsted, Allentown, Flemington, Ocean City, Maurice River, Commercial Township, City of Wildwood North Wildwood, West Wildwood, Wildwood Crest, Gloucester City, Seaside Heights, Little Egg Harbor,

Bernardsville, Bedminster, Galloway Township, Bloomingdale, Sparta, Stone Harbor, Brick Vineland, Manville, Rocky Hill, Atlantic Highlands)

- One Municipal Self Assessment is complete (Upper)
- Two Opportunities and Constraints Report are in process (Manchester, Stafford)
- Two Opportunities and Constraints Report are complete (Morristown, Vernon)
- One Action Plan is completed (Millstone)

We continue to work with Lakewood and Woolwich on their biennial reviews. We are working through ingress/egress concerns from neighboring Brick. We received the requested letter from Woolwich supporting their request to unwind their TDR program. A meeting was held with SADC to discuss the request in which several issues were identified. We will be working to address the issues. In addition, Newton and Toms River have begun their biennial reviews.

We anticipate receiving 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 in time for the February PIC meeting. 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.

After two internal planning meetings, a third meeting is scheduled for February 4th with the DAG to discuss the timeline and general terms for the rule update. Informal feedback sessions were held with several planning partners and one more is anticipated. The next step is to schedule an interagency meeting to discuss the details of the rule opening. So far, discussions were held with NJ Future, NJ Littoral Society, the League of Municipalities, the NJ County Planners Association, the NJ Builders Association and NJAPA. I anticipate scheduling a discussion with NJPO next.

The Office is working on the next two initiatives related to resiliency planning. The first is a FEMA concept of a resiliency bootcamp. A call was held with a sample of municipalities to determine what they would like to see from such a program. Probably the biggest take-away is they do not want to see a "one and done" approach. They would like to see continuing assistance in resiliency planning. FEMA, with input from OPA, is now trying to figure out how best to achieve this goal. A call with FEMA, OEM, OPA and DEP is scheduled for February 8th to discuss this and other joint efforts and collaboration.

The second consists of working with the Rutgers Climate Change and Resiliency Center to develop a program for masters students throughout their course of study for an opportunity for students to work with municipalities for continuing support. This program also addresses the need for something over and above the "one and done" programs of individualized webinars. This program also feeds off of the really successful program completed for Atlantic Highlands and Keansburg. Staff has identified 6 possible communities which will be narrowed down to three (another 6 have been identified as backup).

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 is in final internal review, as is an announcement to the municipalities regarding the coordination effort. 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. The Office is also working with the Highlands on their Economic Sustainability Plan.

The next director review on the Sustainable Jersey project was held on February 2nd. While there are a few items yet to finalize prior to a formal recommendation, there is enough agreement that the program can be presented to the PIC. As a result, I will be putting it on the agenda for the February PIC meeting.

The revised draft PIA template was sent to State agencies on January 21st with a request to provide comments by February 10th. It is anticipated to go 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 continues. 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.

I participated in a call with DEP's Assistant Commissioner of Environmental Justice, representing both the SPC and the Department of State. A good discussion regarding how the SPC can assist EJ communities was held.

Office Staff met with Melanie, the ED of the BAC, to discuss our 2021 goals and implementation plan. We identified a workplan to address those items identified in the 2020 year-end report and I will report on that progress quarterly, although much of the activity will be addressed in these regular updates.

A meeting is scheduled with staff, the Chairman Wright and Commissioner Terenik who works at ACDEVCO on February 4th. The purpose of the meeting is to determine whether the SPC can be helpful with the redevelopment efforts in Atlantic City.

The Office held a call with NJTPA. We discussed their Transportation Demand Management and Mobility Plan for their region and their Statewide TMA oversight. We intend to work together to use and expand each other's data and communication ability to reach shared goals.

The Office held a prep call with the Burlington County Bridge Commission (the planning arm of Burlington County) to go over the municipal presentation for the 12 Burlington County communities involved with the Route 130 Corridor plan re-endorsement. It is anticipated that there will be approximately 3 or 4 calls that will incorporate all 12 municipalities to answer questions they may have about the process moving forward. Those calls are currently being scheduled and they are anticipated to be in mid-February.

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.

S2607/A2785 -- Requires land use plan element of municipal master plan to include climate change related hazard vulnerability assessment, passed both houses (58-21-0). The Office supports this bill.

A155 -- Prohibits State departments and agencies from considering or requiring compliance by Highlands planning area municipalities with Highlands regional master plan in certain circumstances. The Office does not support this Bill. It appears to undermine the Highlands Act and it is in conflict with putting State financial resources toward State priorities.

S2605/A4554 - Directs BPU to establish utility-scale solar energy development program; modifies State's renewable energy portfolio standards. This bill is under review by the office. It is concerning as while the intent is good and in line with the Governor's goals, it allows large scale solar projects on farmland. This is a good example of competing priorities. We are researching the matter and have reached out to several state agency partners.

Masthead design for the OPA newsletter has been approved. We are currently creating mailing lists and designing a test newsletter to be distributed internally. It is anticipated that the first public facing newsletter will be ready for distribution within the next week.

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

Danielle Esser and Secretary Fisher thanked Director Rendeiro for an extensive report and are looking forward to the BPU presentation.

President Fiordaliso commented that in order to achieve the goal of 100% clean energy by 2050 NJBPU will be working in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture, Secretary Fisher and his team regarding farmland and solar and assuring that what needs to be protected will be protected, but that we will not achieve our goals by only putting solar on rooftops, it must be more than that.

NEW BUSINESS

NJBPU Presentation

President Fiordaliso introduced Ken Sheehan for the presentation and spoke about the goals in the Plan. Ken Sheehan presented the slide show presentation (available on the SPC website).

President Fiordaliso mentioned having partners throughout the State in various agencies like the Economic Development Authority, Department of Labor, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Education and that he is so gratified to see the holistic approach by the State trying to achieve the goals that need to be achieved.

Director Rendeiro asked President Fiordaliso for more involvement in the Plan Endorsement process to provide to municipalities that are in the process more information regarding BPU's programs. This will help to formalize what is being said to the municipalities, not only regarding programs like community solar but also for community energy planning and the clean energy innovation economy as well.

Director Rendeiro suggested that maybe an incentive to plan endorsed municipalities will help them be part of the program; perhaps giving them points or funding. We can do a better job on promoting what the BPU does. Offering them a program and encouraging the communities to participate would be the goal.

President Fiordaliso agreed and offered to get in contact with Mr. Sheehan for any information needed.

Secretary Fisher spoke. "Thank you, President Fiordaliso for an extraordinary and informative presentation. One factor that I want you all to consider is preserved farms. We have funded over 2 billion dollars in the State to preserve development rights on farms and they are permitted to have two megs of solar to run anything that takes place in their operation. Working farms are essential to our existence and especially during this pandemic, we have witnessed people flocking to farms because farm products are important for their existence. I am asking to pay particular attention to the soil as the world is chewing up land and populations increase; soil and resources must always be in our view in our plan for the future. Prime soils must be protected if we are going to have agriculture in our mist. Good farmland is the medium for farmers' existence. New Jersey soils are renowned for producing some of the best crops in United States. Some of our counties are top rank out of the 3,000 counties in the country.

There is ground on farms that is marginal and those grounds should be considered for farmers to make available. The department sent to sponsors of the bill including Senator Smith and others, amendments to perfect the bill to make sure to protect these soils to make sure that the farm and the community can contribute together for these goals. I want to make sure that the Committee remind themselves of prime soils which are very important in our State.

My conclusion is that large scale, massive project not be permitted on preserved lands. We're okay with loss of farmland outside of the ADAs because they are regions that are identified by the counties as to where agriculture is the preferred land use and there is a strong potential for future agricultural production. High value lands in the ADA must be carefully and judiciously protected. I would like to have this done by statute rather than a rule."

Chairman Wright thanked Secretary Fisher for his statement and commented that he will look into where this intersects specifically with SPC and the State Development and Redevelopment Plan and what the priorities that are to be taken.

President Fiordaliso expressed that their goal is not in any way to alter the prime soil, that they understand how important it is for the State of New Jersey as our farms decrease every year and as the most densely populated

State in the Union want to protect those lands. We try to take things prudently step by step trying to look at all eventualities and possibilities. Thank you to Secretary Fisher in pointing out some of the issues.

Danielle Esser expressed on behalf of the Economic Development Agency, to be fully in support of everything that President Fiordaliso and Secretary Fisher acknowledged, and it is all consistent with the Governor's Plan for economic growth. Danielle thanked their partnership and offered EDA's support.

Commissioner Elizabeth Terenik commented that being involved with different issues including community development in Atlantic City, Elizabeth wondered why casinos don't have solar panels on their roof tops and will be happy to work with NJDEP on this issue on trying to make that happen. Commissioner Terenik commented that she had the honor to chair the Governor's Atlantic City Restart and Recovery group on Economic Diversification and expressed that the blue economic is the number one recommended industry for Atlantic City and asked if there are any decisions made about the wind institute, hoping that Atlantic City would benefit from it.

President Fiordaliso commented that no decisions have been made at this moment, and that this project will be a major infusion into the economy of South Jersey. The goal is to make New Jersey the supply chain for the offshore wind in the entire east coast. This will bring thousands of jobs to New Jersey and millions of economic growth.

President Fiordaliso commented that creating a new industry and being in the midst of the energy revolution in the State of New Jersey, he feels very optimistic that we will have a new Federal partner like the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Working with the states is going to be beneficial to the green revolution throughout the United States. We are 4% of the population and create 25% of the pollution in the world. We have to ensure the fact that we have to do our part. President Fiordaliso commented that he's thrilled to join the PARIS agreement and RGGI. It all helps in mitigating the effects of climate change.

Commissioner Bruce Harris asked if there is anything in the Energy Master Plan that deals with reliability? From the consumer perspective there are concerns about what happens to the power during storms and ways we can reduce the number of outages. He also asked if the Energy Master Plan has looked at the impact of electric vehicles. With GM's announcement and China moving more into electric vehicles. According to the NY Times, the electricity consumption is going to increase 25%. How do we deal with that? Being involved with many municipal programs as a former mayor, I was never aware that BPU had programs that can help municipalities and wonder who the best person to contact to find out what these programs are all about.

President Fiordaliso referred Commissioner Harris to contact Mr. Sheehan in reference to municipal programs.

In reference to infrastructure, President Fiordaliso commented that since Sandy, the BPU has authorized billions of dollars for infrastructure and enhancements to mitigate and shorten the duration and frequency of power outages. As far as electric vehicles are concerned, the BPU is working toward the electrification of the State fleet School buses and NJ Transit buses. It's a twofold project by creating the electrification of these vehicles and creating the EV infrastructure to avoid range anxiety. That will necessitate a network of charging stations throughout the State of New Jersey. The Governor has a goal of 330,000 electric vehicles on the road by 2025. We have an incentive program for the purchase of electric vehicles.

Andy Swords from NJDOT expressed the optimism about the new Federal administration. NJDOT is supporting the work in Paulsboro with assistant on the needed transportation infrastructure and continues to work with the Turnpike Authority, South Jersey Transportation Authority, and NJ Transit on electrification strategies.

Secretary Fisher asked as we move away from diesel, how do those gaps get filled? Is it propane or solar? How fast is the expectation for solar? President Fiordaliso commented that it will take a lot of money and time to transform and convert, that some will run solar and some will run electric. This project will take some time to develop.

Commissioner Robinson referred to Walter Lane.

Walter Lane from Somerset County commented that through the leadership of the County Commissioners and the Energy Council challenge us to review the State Energy Master Plan and define some projects and initiatives to be consistent with the State goals. The County will help to support implementation of the State Energy Master Plan by creating a framework for our municipalities. He mentioned the formation of the green task force to look out for the business community, county planning and community college. The members of the county also talked about on how to have a workforce to help support the green industry. We have an EV readiness plan and if we receive funding from NJTPA to update our circulation element to provide a framework to prepare for electrifying the transportation system. We will also look to work with other counties.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further comments from the Commission or the public, Chairman Wright asked for a motion to adjourn. President Fiordaliso made the motion, and it was seconded by Secretary Fisher. The meeting was adjourned at 10:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Donna Rendeiro".

Donna Rendeiro, Secretary
State Planning Commission

Dated: March 3, 2021

ATTACHMENT A
NEW JERSEY STATE PLANNING COMMISSION ATTENDEES
DATE: FEBRUARY 3, 2021 TIME: 9:30 AM

Steven Gleeson - DAG
Ken Sheehan - NJBPU
Meg Cavanagh – NJDEP
Jason Kasler - NJPO
Dave Rosenblatt - JDEP
Rhyan Grech - Pinelands Preservation Alliance
Jeff Kolakowski - NJBA
Sam Kaplan - NJDCA
Oriana Holmes-Price - Rutgers Univ. Student
Jonathan Sternesky - HMFA
Matt Baumgardner - NJDEP
Jackie Huston - Planner, Gloucester County Public Works
Ruth Foster - NJDEP
Walter Lane - Somerset County, Planning Board
Anthony Soriano
Theresa Ziegler
Wilma
Charlotte Leon
Grant Lucking