

Dear Mr. Jung Kim,

The following is a copy of our letter which was sent to Ms. Swan concerning the Lakewood Township plans:

Eileen Swan, Executive Director
Department of Community Affairs
Office of Smart Growth
101 S. Broad Street
PO Box 204
Trenton, NJ 08625-0204

RE: Petition for Plan Endorsement
Lakewood Township, Ocean County

Dear Ms. Swan,

We would like to take this opportunity to submit our comments regarding the Petition for Plan Endorsement filed by the Township of Lakewood, NJ.

We are concerned that their petition will have consideration prior to the expiration date of March 15, 2007 for Mainland coastal Centers.

The Lakewood Township petition proposes a change from Suburban Planning Area (PA2) to Metropolitan Planning Area (PA1) which, with a higher impervious coverage, would severely impact the environment and water supply, i.e. aquifers and ground water.

Large sections of Lakewood are located in sensitive areas with fresh water tributaries to the Metedeconk River and Kettle Creek. There are only a few miles between those areas and the estuaries of these two rivers to the Barnegat Bay. Barnegat Bay is already in danger of eutrophication. Nitrogen and phosphate levels are rising causing an increase of green and red algae, which will eventually form a thick blanket starving the bay bottom of oxygen and sunlight. This will lead to detrimental consequences to the clamming industry, which has been declining since 1980, and in turn to tourism.

Therefore, we respectfully ask that the OSG and NJDEP consider substituting Lakewood's proposed PA1 area with smaller cores and centers for development and redevelopment that would protect water supply, endangered and threatened species-- animals and plants alike--and their habitat.

And may we suggest that prior to moving ahead with the endorsement procedures, Lakewood Township should be encouraged to have a compliant master plan in place.

We thank you for your attention, time, and consideration to our comments.

Sincerely,

Margit Meissner-Jackson, Conservation Chair
Sierra Club Ocean County

Copy to:

Commissioner Lisa P. Jackson, NJDEP (via regular mail)

Assistant Commissioner Mark Mauriello, NJDEP (via regular mail)

Jeanne Herb, Office of Policy & Planning, NJDEP (via regular mail)

Jung Kim, Planner OSG (via e-mail)