

STATE PLANNING NOTES

New Jersey State Planning Commission

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Commission Approves 'Smart Growth' Vision

The New Jersey State Planning Commission has approved a new and improved version of the blueprint for "smart growth" in New Jersey. "New Jersey's historic initiative to preserve 1 million acres of open space in the next decade is only one part of keeping the 'garden' in the Garden State," says Governor Christine Todd Whitman. "Saving farmland and open space requires better designing and smarter planning of our cities and suburban areas."

"The Interim Plan is a culmination of the thorough process that began in 1996. The underlying philosophy and concepts contained in New Jersey's first plan, adopted in 1992, are reiterated and reinforced in the new plan," according to Commission Chairman Joseph J. Maraziti, Jr.

The Interim Plan was approved on March 31 at the State Planning Commission's monthly meeting, which was held at the newly renovated War Memorial Building in Trenton.

"We now have a more comprehensive, more up-to-date and more usable plan for shaping what kind of state, county, and city, suburb or town in which we want to live, work, play and raise our families. This is a vision for a New Jersey that grows smart," says Commissioner Charles Kuperus, chair of the Plan Development Committee.

"Smart growth means having jobs near your home. It means being able to walk around the corner to the store and chat with your neighbors over an ice cream on the way. Bad planning, or no planning, results in suburban sprawl, increasing dependence on cars, choking our roads and wasting enormous amounts of public

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Hudson and Burlington Work with Municipalities In Cooperative, Regional Planning for Their Futures

The New Jersey State Planning Commission twice this year has had the pleasure of voting on two unique, collaborative plans — each focused on riverfront redevelopment across from our metropolitan neighbors of New York

City and Philadelphia.

In both cases, county governments — Hudson and Burlington — worked closely with their municipalities. These two endorsed plans serve as examples of the kinds of things that can hap-

pen in a region through a cooperative planning process that respects municipal interests and prerogatives.

Whether a municipality is located in a county that is urban,

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Briefly...

Maraziti Honored By Planning Officials

Joseph J. Maraziti, Jr., chairman of the New Jersey State Planning Commission, has won a 1999 Achievement in Planning Award from the New Jersey Planning Officials. Maraziti accepted the award at the organization's 60th anniversary dinner on April 30.

Maraziti was honored for his "outstanding individual contributions to planning." Appointed by Gov. Christie Whitman in April 1998 and confirmed the state Senate, he has been chairman and a trustee of Morris 2000; chairman and an officer of New Jersey Future; and a member of the New Jersey Committee of the Regional Plan Association.

Show Us Your Greens

A "green" is any formal or informal open space around which buildings and streets are placed and which acts as a focus for development as well as human

activity. Traditional communities in New England are laid out around a commons or green.

This planning tradition is not as strong in New Jersey. However,

Designing New Jersey Soon Will Be Released

D*esigning New Jersey* is a companion document to the State Plan focusing on physical planning and design issues. This publication will stress the critical importance of good design and provide planning and design principles for building balanced communities consistent with the State Plan's vision. *Designing New Jersey* will be available this Fall.

there are many places around the state where such greens play a valuable role in community life.

The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan encourages greens as focal points in the design of new communities. The Office of State Planning wants to compile and ultimately publish a catalogue of New Jersey's greens.

If you have a green in your community, let us know. Historic photographs, aerial views and plan representations are welcome, in addition to contemporary, ground-level views.

Please contact Carlos Rodrigues at 609-292-3097. You may also reach him by e-mail at rodrigues_c@tre.state.nj.us and show us your green.



Office of State Planning

Members of a local community organization enjoy a pancake breakfast in Princeton Borough's Palmer Square, an example of a green.



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Spotlight on Planning: *Jersey City's New Urbanist Project*

Every resident can walk three minutes to a rail station to get to work. Parking garages are hidden out of site. Look down the residential avenues and enjoy the view at the end: the Statue of Liberty. Take a breather in any of a dozen “pocket parks” nearby.

That’s the vision for a new neighborhood recently planned and to be developed over the next 20 years on the Jersey City waterfront. The first phase of units is expected to be constructed within two years.

Using new urban techniques, the project of developer Peter Mocco on an 80-acre site will be

very dense: at about 100 to 160 gross dwelling units to the acre.

Good design can accommodate high-density development with amenities that people want — parks, plazas, stores, convenient parking, schools and such — all within easy walking distance.

“You can see how profoundly unnecessary it is to have a car on this site,” says Andreas Duany, whose firm, Duany Plater-Zyberk, designed the Liberty Harbor North during a charrette in March.

The neighborhood will be within a 10-minute walk to the PATH subway to downtown and

midtown Manhattan, as well as a ferry to downtown.

Among the features of the project are a waterfront drive, featuring places for bicycling and walking. The mass of the buildings are planned to be similar to Central Park West, and a central square that is aimed to be an enjoyable public space, is modeled after Grammercy Park. The central square will be within a five-minute walk from all homes in the project, which was presented during the final charrette session at Jersey City’s City Hall to about 200 people.

Spotlight on Planning: *Hillsborough*



Looney Ricks Kiss

Hillsborough Township in Somerset County faced a challenge: how do you take a suburban strip that many residents dislike for its nondescript appearance and turn it into an inviting, pedestrian-friendly Main Street?

While the Sourland Mountains stand out for their natural beauty in part of Hillsborough, the only part of the municipality that some people see is from their car windows when they're commuting through the congested, five-mile commercial strip of state Route 206 that slices through the municipality. Wanting to make decisions with community input and acceptance, local officials used an

innovative method to seek residents' opinions.

The nationally award-winning project is part of the Central New Jersey community's comprehensive review and update of its master plan, which was approved by the planning board on July 8.

Since discovering the preferences of 35,000 people living in a 54-square-mile area was a challenge, Hillsborough hired Looney Ricks Kiss of Princeton and T& M Associates of Middletown and launched an online survey last summer. More than 2,000 participated in the survey, which proved to be an excellent tool for the computer-literate communi-

ty to consider, choose and then communicate preferences.

They clicked on simulation models to see the difference between what is and what could be. For instance, they made personal choices to remove overhead utility wires and poles and bury them underground, and add sidewalks and landscaping and other features. The majority of the residents said they liked what they saw.

The computerized visioning process, which was conducted for two months, involved placing computer terminals at four sites — the public library, the YMCA, a popular cafe, and another area



Looney Ricks Kiss

business. Citizens who are novice computer users were able to finish the survey in 20 minutes. The survey was also available on the township's web site for those with Internet access.

The majority of people who responded to the survey said they were dissatisfied with the existing conditions along the Route 206 corridor in the Main Street area. Many said that the traffic was too heavy to make the area inviting and that there was a sense of randomness and general lack of cohesion and identity in the area.

The survey contained questions, statements, lists and images. Citizens clicked on the mouse to record their choices.

The project won Hillsborough a national award, presented by the American Planning Association at its meeting in Seattle.

Carlos Rodrigues, special projects manager for the Office of State Planning, says, "If used appropriately, this type of technology has the potential to be far more than just another interesting gadget with a short shelf life, and could become an important resource in the rapidly expanding planning tool box."



Spotlight on Planning: Somerset Charrette

A four-day design charrette put sharp focus on visions for greater sustainability and livability within the Bridgewater-Raritan-Somerville regional center in Somerset County.

Organized by the Regional Plan Association, the charrette was open to the public and included several public presentations and opportunities for public input.

Three design teams worked around the clock to develop visions for a number of important sites in the area, such as the Raritan Woolen Mills, the former Somerville landfill, and an undeveloped area adjacent to the Bridgewater Commons Mall.

The participants also developed design concepts for a linear park along the Raritan River, thus reopening public access to the waterfront. The charrette participants also explored treatments for calming traffic on Route 22 and other state highways in the area, which act as barriers to pedestrian and other forms of mobility within the regional center.

In addition to the three design teams, there were two focus groups that developed action agendas during the charrette. One was on policy and implementation; the other was devoted specifically to transportation.

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STREETS: VIEW LOOKING WEST ALONG PROPOSED RARITAN RIVERSIDE PARKWAY - WITH PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL (I MIXED USE) TO THE RIGHT (NORTH) AND GREENWAY / RECREATION TO THE LEFT (SOUTH)

A final report documenting the Somerset charrette process and its recommendations will be available from the Regional Plan Association.

The charrette received final support from the Lincoln Institute for Land Policy, Somerset County, and the three municipalities in the State Plan-designated regional center. The Office of State Planning provided technical and logistical support.

Spotlight on Planning: *Northeast States' Retreat*

Representatives of 11 states shared growth-management strategies at a two-day retreat in Princeton. The gathering in March was initiated by the Office of State Planning and was co-sponsored by the office, the Regional Plan Association and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy.

The goal for the retreat was to cultivate a network among state planners in the Northeast, and to initiate a continuous exchange of ideas on policy issues and planning processes, according to Raymond Janairo, program manager for the RPA. The meeting brought together for the first time people who direct growth management and planning for their states.

“Embarking on a new millennium, issues of growth management and state planning have risen to the fore in many states across the nation. States in the Northeast, as well as across the country, are moving to improve state planning to curb suburban sprawl and begin reinvestment in urban centers,” says Janairo.

Representatives from 11 states participated in the Northeast State Planning Leadership Retreat, held March 4 and March 5 at the Nassau Inn in Princeton. The states are New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Delaware and Maryland.

Commissioner Jane Kenny of the Department of Community Affairs gave the keynote address. She discussed Governor Christine Todd Whitman's commitment to containing sprawl, redeveloping the cities and relieving traffic congestion.

The Commissioner noted that now that the Office of State Planning is housed in DCA, she is "working to convince municipalities and the public that smart growth is designed to help them, not hurt them."

"The Governor has pledged that State Plan implementation will remain voluntary at the local level, not a mandate," she added. "At the state level, we're taking steps to help local governments become more familiar with the State Plan, and we're working to more closely integrate the State Plan into the thinking" in state departments, which are required to follow the plan.

"It's important that we get together and share our common victories and challenges, and learn from each other," the Commissioner told the group.

Herb Simmens, director of the Office of State Planning, launched a discussion among the group on the workings of each state participant's office. The group explored the challenges and successes of creating statewide visions. The group also examined an example of a Central New Jersey development challenge and the degree to which it is consistent with the principles of the State Plan.

The group agreed that it was valuable to continue meeting, at least once a year, and to discuss issues that are of common concern to the Northeast states' representatives. Regional issues, such as high-speed rail, and conservation and development issues related to the Highlands, are of keen interest to New Jersey and its neighboring states.

The group expects to meet next year in Cambridge, Mass.

"At the state level, we're taking steps to help local governments become more familiar with the State Plan, and we're working to more closely integrate the State Plan into the thinking" in state departments, which are required to follow the plan, says Commissioner Jane Kenny.

and private money,” Kuperus adds. “We can do better.”

The Interim Plan promotes sustainable development, which means development that meets the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

“That means we don’t use up all of the land, pollute or deplete our water supplies, ruin our air, and overburden our roads and infrastructure,” Maraziti says.

The Interim Plan goes beyond simply saying where development and investment should occur. It contains a section on urban design — the way in which buildings and activities are physically organized in relation to each other. Design is crucial to how communities function and how the residents respond and feel about a place.

Design Policies A First

These design policies, a first for New Jersey’s Plan, will demonstrate the state’s commitment to attractive, livable communities for our residents. They provide a tool for planners and citizens in the fight to improve communities.

“Fundamental design decisions — the way buildings address a

street or plaza, the scale and orientation of public spaces, and the attention to streetscapes and amenities — are not matters of taste. They are empirically driven planning tools to help achieve the same goals that the rest of the State Plan is dedicated to,” says Simmens.

The Interim Plan also includes measures called indicators, which will be used to gauge conditions over time. Among the indicators are the amount of developed land per capita and per job; the proportion of all trips made by transit, bicycling and walking; and the degree to which local, county, regional, state agency and federal plans and practices are consistent with the State Plan.

The approval of the Interim Plan this spring was an important step in the extensive public process to review and revise the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. That process, called cross-acceptance, involves the comparison of the State Plan with county and municipal master plans.

The state’s 21 counties and its 566 municipalities were asked to conduct a detailed review of their own land-use and functional plans, as well as ordinances and regulations implementing those plans.

The process included comprehensive negotiations between the State Planning Commission and public groups, counties and municipalities.

There were more than 40 public meetings, from Sussex

County to the north to Cape May County to the south. More than 200 public comments were submitted, in addition to nearly 400 issues negotiated by the county and local committees, in sessions with the State Planning Commission and Office of State Planning staff members.

The goals and policies contained in the Interim Plan were discussed and brought into accordance with local plans.

State departments also participated as part of the cross-acceptance process, seeing how their plans fit with the goals and objectives of the State Plan.

An independent assessment of the fiscal, social and environmental impacts of the Interim Plan and a series of public hearings will be conducted before final adoption of the new State Plan.

Collegial Approach

“This is a collegial approach,” says Governor Whitman, who observes that the process of improving and readopting the State Plan is a bottom-up process involving people in municipalities around the state “who appreciate what they have and know what they want.”

By municipalities buying in to the State Plan, “that way it’s going to last. That way, it survives us and it truly takes hold. I believe we are truly, truly going to make a difference.”

New Jersey has been held up a model for the nation, she notes. “Let’s get it done and let’s get it right and let’s get it done permanently.”

The full text of the Interim Plan is available on the Office of State Planning’s website. The address is <http://www.state.nj.us/osp>



Office of State Planning

Charles Kuperus and Jane Kenny

suburban or rural, or a mixture, regional planning and cooperation between and among counties and municipalities is proving that home rule can be enhanced by cooperative planning, according to Commission Chairman Joseph J. Maraziti, Jr.

In January, the Commission unanimously endorsed a plan for an “urban complex,” which is an urban area composed of an urban center and two or more adjacent municipalities. While Jersey City is the core, the other 11 municipalities in Hudson County work together with Jersey City as an economic, social and geographic unit.

Specifically, the Strategic Revitalization Plan for the Hudson County Urban Complex is a blueprint aimed at revitalizing Hudson County and implementing the State Development and Redevelopment Plan in the 12 Hudson County municipalities.

The municipalities are Bayonne City, Guttenberg Town, Hoboken City, Kearny Town, Secaucus Town, Weehawken Township, East Newark Borough, Harrison Town, Jersey City, North Bergen Township, Union City and West New York Town.

The Hudson County plan identified areas for 169,000 new jobs and 63,000 new residents projected for 2020. It has developed a series of indicators to measure progress in meeting the goals of its plan, and a detailed implementation strategy for all levels of government.

The Commission’s endorsement of the county plan will entitle the county and the municipalities within it to greater priority to

receive state funding, permit approvals, and technical assistance.

Powerful Synergy

“What is so dramatic and exciting here is the powerful synergy between the State Plan and urban New Jersey,” says Maraziti. “Hudson County’s strategic revitalization plan serves as a model for other urbanized counties to work together on a regional basis for the benefit of all. The State Plan can be used to benefit urban counties that choose to tap into it.”

Department of Community Affairs Commissioner Jane M. Kenny says, “Hudson County has demonstrated how the State Plan can be used as an effective tool for sensible growth. We encourage other urban areas to follow that lead.”

This is also an example of the good that can happen when counties — in partnership with municipalities — participate fully in the cross-acceptance process, says Herbert Simmens, director of the Office of State Planning. “Hudson’s plan wasn’t something hatched in a backroom in the bureaucracy in Trenton,” says Simmens. “It sprang from the county and its towns and neighborhoods.”

The same is true for the Burlington County Route 130/Delaware River Corridor Region Development Plan. The State Planning Commission approved the southern New Jersey county’s plan at the April meeting of the commission, which was held in Roebing.

Burlington County and local officials are working on implementing the visions, goals and objectives of the State Plan, to make it real and improve the quality of life and resuscitate the local economy.

STATE PLANNING

NOTES

State Planning Notes is produced by the Office of State Planning for the New Jersey State Planning Commission.

Governor Christine Todd Whitman
Commissioner Jane M. Kenny
Chairman Joseph J. Maraziti, Jr.
Executive Director Herbert Simmens

New Jersey Office of State Planning
Department of Community Affairs
P.O. Box 204
33 West State St.
Trenton, NJ 08625-0204
609-292-7156
609-292-3292 (fax)

Meeting information line:
1-800-522-0129

<http://www.state.nj.us/osp/>

Editor: Kathleen Bird-Maurice

Graphics Coordinator: Diane Chepega

Despite the significant growth in Burlington County over the past three decades, some of the 12 communities along the Route 130 corridor and the Delaware River experienced a slow but steady decline. Rundown strip malls and vacant commercial buildings stand as daily reminders to the economic decline. Yet other communities in the corridor are experiencing new growth in ways that contribute to sprawl.

But Burlington County and local officials, working in a cooperative effort, are planning — literally, planning — to change all of that. They are working on implementing the visions, goals and objectives of the State Plan, to make it real and improve the quality of life and resuscitate the local economy.

County and local officials have been working for three years on a strategic plan for revitalizing and redeveloping the Route 130 and Delaware riverfront communities. Draft reports the size of the Manhattan Yellow Pages were released in December 1997 and officials spent 1998 and the early part of this year refining their plans and building a consensus among citizens, community leaders and elected and appointed officials at the state, county and local levels.

The municipalities are Beverly City, Burlington City, Burlington Township, Cinnaminson Township, Delanco Township, Delran Township, Edgewater Park Township, Florence Township, Palmyra Borough, Riverside Township, Riverton Borough and Willingboro Township.

Participating in the strategic

planning efforts, as well, are representatives of Burlington County government, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, the state Department of Transportation, Burlington County's engineering department and Burlington County College.

In order to gather widespread input and visualize the Route 130 corridor of the future, Willingboro and Edgewater Park arranged a "charrette," a focused, dynamic workshop attended by planners, architects, engineers, citizens and others in early October.

"Burlington County and its 12 municipal partners should be commended for working on this blueprint for smart growth that is aimed at revitalizing and redeveloping existing communities that lie between Route 130 and the Delaware River," says Maraziti.

"They are working on implementing the visions, goals and objectives of the State Plan, to make it real and to improve the quality of life for residents and resuscitate the local economy," he adds.

In addition, the plan proposes accommodating significant areas of new, projected growth. Simmens notes, "This is about more than reversing decline. New growth is also planned by these communities in a cooperative venture. The location and design of this new growth will meet goals of the State Plan — that is, to create livable places with strong environmental protections and access to mass transportation."

Florence Mayor George E. Sampson said that implementation of the plan will produce employment, ratables and revenue for the

12 communities that put aside their political and individual differences and worked together for the benefit of all. “It’s a win-win,” he said. “Participation in the key to success.”

Maraziti observes, “The plan is a vision for these communities, and recommends a series of policies, actions and strategies to be implemented by local, county, state and federal agencies, as well as the private sector, in order to achieve that vision. This plan is based upon community input and decisions reached through a multi-year consensus planning process that was facilitated by the Burlington County Office of Land Use Planning.”

The plan is already being implemented. Examples include the redevelopment of the Willingboro Plaza shopping center, the cleanup and redevelopment of the Roebling Steel site, and various transportation improvements within the corridor.



Office of State Planning

Florence Mayor George Sampson, Commission Chairman Joseph J. Maraziti Jr. and Principal Planner Mark Remsa of the Burlington County Office of Land Use Planning.

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Share Your Master Plans

Dear Municipal Official,

If you have updated your master plan in the past five years, the Office of State Planning wants to know about it.

New Jersey’s 566 municipalities and 21 counties have a lot to offer each other by sharing. We at the Office of State Planning are interested in learning more about good examples of planning and development regulations. By sharing with each other, local communities can gain much by finding out which of their fellow communities are facing similar issues and moving forward in a positive way.

If you’ve done the work, tell us and we’ll help spread the word around the state. Please mail me your latest reexamination report and master plan to the New Jersey Office of State Planning, P.O. Box 204, Trenton, NJ 08625-0204.

Sincerely,

*Herbert Simmens
Executive Director*

STATE PLANNING

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New Jersey Office of State Planning
Department of Community Affairs
P.O. Box 204
Trenton, NJ 08625-0204

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Word Is Getting Out in NJ About State Plan Benefits

Judging by the number of communities participating in the State Plan process and their enthusiasm about it, the word is getting out about the State Plan.

More than 180 communities have proactively stepped forward to be part of the state planning process. This includes 71 municipalities that have been designated as centers by the State Planning Commission, or are included in an endorsed regional plan.

Twelve communities in Hudson County and 12 in Burlington County worked with their counties and received Commission approval of their joint plans

earlier this year.

Sixty additional municipalities have submitted petitions to the Office of State Planning for center designation by the Commission, and approximately 50 others have proposed centers as part of the cross-acceptance process.

The most-recently designated centers are: Washington Borough and Washington Township in Warren County; Bernardsville in Somerset County; and Totowa in Passaic County.

See story on page 1.
