



Smart Growth, NJ

Fall 2007

Cross Acceptance III

Office of Smart Growth Nears Completion of Third Cross Acceptance

by Lorissa Whitaker, Principal Planner

The Office of Smart Growth has made a lot of progress in recent months. By August of 2007, all 21 staff-to-staff negotiation meetings were completed, and the public hearing phase of Cross-acceptance was completed shortly thereafter. OSG continues to synthesize data submitted as part of the negotiation process in order to incorporate this data into the draft Final State Plan. When completed, OSG will publish periodic reports reflecting the outcomes of the negotiation sessions in the form of agreements and any remaining disagreements. When the New Jersey State Planning Commission's negotiating committee determines that the negotiations have produced the highest degree of agreement among the negotiating entities, the committee will submit a report containing a summary of the findings — the draft Statement of Agreements and Disagreements. Cross-acceptance will officially conclude with written Statements of Agreements and Disagreements supported and adopted

by the SPC. The SPC will then incorporate the negotiated agreements into the draft Final State Plan.

The concluding steps for adopting a Final State Plan include preparing an assessment of the impacts of the draft Final State Plan. The SPC will consider the results of the Impact Assessment and may choose to amend the plan as appropriate. Upon consideration of the Statement of Agreements and Disagreements, public comments and the Impact Assessment, the SPC shall approve for distribution the draft Final State Plan, as well as an Infrastructure Needs Assessment. OSG and the SPC shall then conduct a minimum of six public hearings on the draft. Lastly, public, municipal and county review will occur prior to the final adoption.

How We Got Here

In 2004, a new round of Cross-acceptance to update the *continued on page 5*

Plan Endorsement: Implementing the State Plan

by Danielle Esser, Policy Advisor

Plan Endorsement is the State Planning Commission's comprehensive planning process developed to encourage long-term municipal, county, regional and state agency plan coordination to achieve the goals of the State Plan at zoning scale. The PE process is linked to many state agency programs and policies and is required in many instances because of this link. PE is the means by which a county, municipality or regional entity can designate a State Plan Center, a smart growth area, a redevelopment area in the rural and environmentally sensitive areas of the State, and comply with the regulations regarding affordable housing and wastewater management.

Through PE, counties, municipalities and regional entities are encouraged to plan on a

regional basis while recognizing the fundamental role of the municipal master plan and development regulations in implementing sound planning policies.

The revision of the PE process to strengthen the planning component and to provide significant benefits is nearly complete. Some of the changes include eliminating the two-tiered process, requiring the appointment of a citizen/local-based Advisory Committee, requiring petitioners to undertake community visioning before updating planning documents, such as a master plan, and forming a cooperative agreement which describes the concrete tasks that are required for a petitioner to receive Plan Endorsement by the SPC.

continued on page 4



In This Issue...

OSG Brownfields Program

Page 2

Main Street New Jersey

Page 3

Smart Future Grants

Page 4

From the Executive Director... **Ben Spinelli**

Managing growth in the most-densely-populated state is an incredible challenge. At OSG, we are working to develop a plan for New Jersey's future that addresses the economic activity, services and facilities necessary to support a diverse population while protecting natural resources. New



Jersey is known for its beautiful beaches, abundant farmland, dynamic cities and rich history; however, unpredictable development has led to uncontrolled growth and eroded the quality of life that drew generations to New Jersey. It is OSG's mission to plan a sustainable and prosperous future for our state. We are working to develop policies and a plan that will help ensure that New Jersey will continue to be a great place to live, work and play for future generations.

OSG has been working with local and county governments, state agencies, and others to create an updated version of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The next version of the State Plan will contain statewide goals and policies as well as subject-related elements. Similar in structure to local master plans, the State Plan will also contain suggestions for implementation strategies at the local and state level. The goal of this collaborative process is to develop a reliable, easy-to-understand guidance tool for local planners, officials, and the state's agencies and departments.

OSG works in specific policy areas to promote and achieve sustainable development. The Brownfields Inter-Agency Team and Redevelopment Task Force work to redevelop former industrial properties. The Main Street program works with communities to create vibrant downtown central business districts. OSG also coordinates state agency policies and programs with the goals and policies set forth in the State Plan and with the

continued on page 3

Update on Brownfields


by Donna Rendeiro, OSG Brownfields Program

Donna Rendeiro, who joined the Office of Smart Growth Brownfields Program in February, 2007, reviews and participates in policy recommendations for the state's brownfield program. She works closely with all of the state's departments and agencies in coordinating the brownfields program and works on redevelopment related issues and with the Office of Economic Growth on urban policy. Donna's previous experience includes redevelopment and shared services at the municipal and county levels.

Working with Alan Miller, coordinator of the Brownfield Redevelopment Interagency Team, Donna oversees activities in the OSG Brownfields Program that have centered on upgrading NJSiteMart.com and designing the program's new image. The enhancements to SiteMart include a customer relationship management system and enhanced searchability, navigability and entitlement security. Data within the system are currently being verified and updated and, in conjunction with NJDEP, will include applicable open DEP cases.

The OSG Brownfields Program tracks and reports on recommendations, and supplies analytical support for, the Brownfields Redevelopment Task Force. The BRTF's approach to Brownfields issues includes a coordinated Brownfields message within the Plan Endorsement process and throughout all departments and agencies of the state, identifying funding sources, overall process enhancements, and addressing redevelopment issues.

OSG's Brownfields staff attends conferences, seminars and educational events to promote the state's financial and process incentives. The office acts as a clearinghouse for all of the state's Brownfields programs and is available for technical advice to assist developers and municipalities in their quest to put Brownfields sites back into productive use. By redeveloping brownfields, we protect resources and utilize existing infrastructure.

New Jersey has one of the most progressive Brownfields programs in the country, and we are working on relaying that message to a wider audience by including real estate professionals, bankers, small business owners and economic development officials. The OSG Brownfields program will continually strive to recommend policy changes that encourage Brownfields redevelopment and to market New Jersey's Brownfields to attract further economic development opportunities. 

Main Street New Jersey

by Heather McCall, Assistant MSNJ Coordinator

2007 Application Round

In August of 2007, Main Street New Jersey held an application workshop for communities interested in becoming a designated MSNJ Community. The workshop was attended by representatives from more than 37 communities hoping to obtain more information on submitting a successful application to become part of the MSNJ program. MSNJ designation provides on-site technical assistance and training to volunteers and staff working to revitalize their downtown. Free technical assistance programs offered through MSNJ include architectural façade and signage renderings, marketing and business recruitment assistance, board training, and parking and safety audits. MSNJ plans to designate three Traditional Designations and three Partner Designations in December of 2007.

Downtown Revitalization and Management Institute

MSNJ offers training through its Downtown Revitalization and Management Institute. The DRMI is offered to representatives from Main Street Communities with the goal of strengthening local capacity and implementation of the four point approach to downtown revitalization. The next DRMI session “Organization: People, Money & Partnerships” will begin on January 29, 2008 at Thomas Edison State College in Trenton. Future sessions include “Creating Economic Opportunity” in April, “Guiding Design on Main Street” in July, and “Promoting Downtown” in October. Attendees of all four sessions receive a certificate from the Department of Community Affairs, and registration is also open to non-Main Street Community representatives.

Main Street Meadowlands

Communities in located in the Meadowlands District will be eligible for assistance through the new Main Street Meadowlands Program. The Meadowlands Commission and MSNJ will launch “Destination Meadowlands” in March of 2008. This session will feature speakers Roger Brooks and Jon Schallert, who will provide valuable insights into making your community and business a destination. Jon Schallert will return in October for “Business Bootcamp,” a follow-up training for business owners.

National Main Street Conference

MSNJ communities will be highlighted at the 2008 National Main Street Conference in Philadelphia. Attendees will have the opportunity to take part in field visits to Millville, Salem, Burlington, and Fairview/Camden Main Street Districts. More information is available at www.mainstreet.org.



The Millville and Glasstown Main Street districts will be highlights of the National Main Street 2008 Conference's tours.

Executive Director

...from Page 2

principles of smart growth, and we serve as advocates for programs that promote the Plan's objectives. We also work with local governments and developers to provide technical assistance for specific projects through the Development Opportunities Inter-Agency Team.

OSG works with municipalities through the Plan Endorsement process to coordinate local planning with the State Plan. We encourage cluster growth and land preservation through the transfer of development rights, mixed-use development in town centers, and preservation of open space. We work with state agencies to preserve the agricultural industry, protect resources, create opportunities for transit-oriented development, revitalize urban centers, locate new schools or offices in walk-able communities, and redevelop brownfields, all part of a comprehensive strategy to build a sustainable future for New Jersey.

OSG's approach is to work collaboratively with New Jersey's cities and towns to help them reach their planning goals and to coordinate the state's resources to support those goals. At OSG, our goal to have a strong foundation to support the land use challenges we will face in the years ahead.

Benjamin L. Spinelli, Esq.

Executive Director


New Jersey Office of Smart Growth

Smart Future Planning Grants

The Smart Future Planning Grant Program is available to counties and municipalities to promote efficient land-use patterns, sustainable design, neighborhood revitalization, economic development, and preservation activities that are consistent with smart growth. Nearly 300 grants have been awarded since the program began in 2000.

The investment of more than two million dollars each year results in economic opportunities and revitalization that are incalculable. Given municipal budgetary constraints, these grants are often essential in getting smart growth planning initiatives started. These awards enable OSG to start a relationship with local governments and to plant seed money to encourage good planning. Once relationships are established, OSG continues to provide technical assistance in collaboration with other state agencies. The initiatives


funded by these grants help attain efficient land use patterns that spur economic development. For example, OSG has awarded funds to many downtown revitalization projects throughout the state, as well as Transit-Oriented Development, Transfer of Development Rights, parking strategies and sustainable design techniques. These initiatives all enable increased efficiency in development that saves money in construction and promotes further economic development.

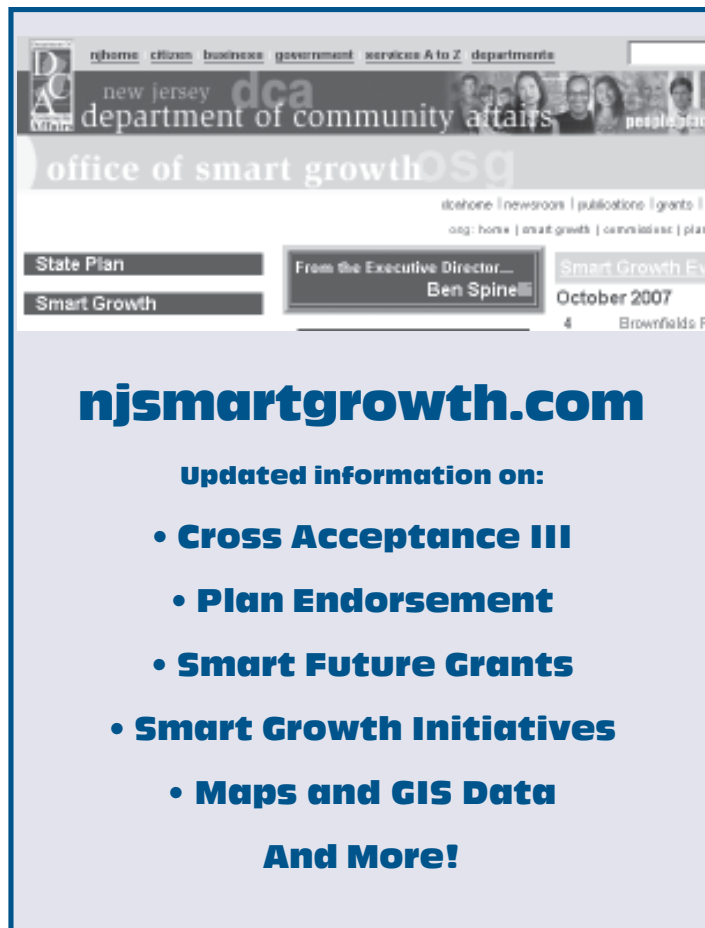
Over the past year, OSG has acquired three additional grant opportunities: Main Street New Jersey, Improvement District Challenge Grants, and Downtown Business Improvement District Zone Loan Fund. In 2006, DCA and OSG launched SAGE, the System for Administering Grants Electronically, as a valuable tool for grant recipients to monitor payments, reports, or expired grants. 

Plan Endorsement ...from Page 1

There will be numerous benefits under the new Plan Endorsement process. An endorsed petition will be recognized as having adopted and implemented plans that are consistent with the State Plan, signifying that the community has appropriately planned for a sustainable future. Thanks to this recognition, the community will rank higher on applications for funding, permits and other state agency programs.

As of Fall, 2007, 16 active petitioners are working towards Plan Endorsement. Since the launch of the current PE process in 2004, the SPC has endorsed seven petitions. Additionally, the Office of Smart Growth has conducted pre-petition meetings with more than 70 municipalities. Many municipalities are interested in pursuing plan endorsement to address the housing requirement implemented by the Council on Affordable Housing or to re-designate a center for eligibility for any number of state agency benefits.

As the most densely populated state, land use planning is essential for New Jersey. As we continue to grow, we must be prepared to manage growth appropriately and responsibly, by directing growth into centers and places with existing infrastructure. Smart Growth can also reduce the strain on local resources and provide a community with a degree of certainty regarding its future. 



The screenshot shows the website interface for njsmartgrowth.com. At the top, there are navigation links for 'home', 'citizen', 'business', 'government', 'services A to Z', and 'departments'. Below this is the header for the 'new jersey dca department of community affairs' and the 'office of smart growth OSG'. A secondary navigation bar includes 'statehome | newsroom | publications | grants | oag: home | smart growth | commission | plan'. A sidebar on the left contains 'State Plan' and 'Smart Growth' buttons. A central box features a quote: 'From the Executive Director... Ben Spina'. To the right, there is a 'Smart Growth E' button and a date 'October 2007'. The main content area displays the website name 'njsmartgrowth.com' and a list of featured items: 'Updated information on:', '• Cross Acceptance III', '• Plan Endorsement', '• Smart Future Grants', '• Smart Growth Initiatives', and '• Maps and GIS Data'. The list concludes with 'And More!'.



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State Development and Redevelopment Plan and the State Plan Policy Map began. Cross-acceptance is a two-way, “conversational” approach to planning, designed to encourage consistency between municipal, county, regional, and state plans and to create a meaningful, up-to-date and viable State Plan. This process is meant to ensure that all New Jersey residents and levels of government have the oppor-

tunity to participate and shape the goals, strategies and policies of the State Plan. On April 28, 2004, the SPC approved the release of the Preliminary State Development & Redevelopment Plan and the Preliminary State Plan Policy Map, which launched the third round of Cross-acceptance.

Through Cross-acceptance, negotiating entities have worked with local governments and residents to compare

their local master plans with the State Plan and to identify potential changes to achieve greater consistency with statewide planning policy. The current round has seen changes to the State Planning Rules, which clarify the procedures for meetings, hearings, notification, and negotiation. Throughout the summer of 2004, OSG staff met with all counties and their constituencies to discuss the Preliminary State Plan and State Plan Policy Map.

The Office of Smart Growth and the SPC proceeded with Cross-acceptance by exchanging information with municipalities, counties and state agencies. In 2005, the process was delayed to incorporate significant environmental information and data provided by the Department of Environmental Protection into the Preliminary State Plan Policy Map to provide a better representation of existing environmental constraints. These data were formally incorporated into the Preliminary State Plan Policy Map on July 19, 2006, and OSG embarked on a rigorous meeting schedule that included meetings at the internal, state agency, staff-to-staff and public levels for all 21 counties.

