



New Jersey Pinelands Commission PRESS RELEASE

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Pinelands Commission advances proposal to increase fees for reviewing development applications

NEW LISBON, N.J. – During its regular meeting today, the New Jersey Pinelands Commission voted to propose amendments to the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan that would increase fees to review development applications in the Pinelands.

“These proposed fee increases are modest and reasonable, and they will help to recoup a portion of the rising costs that are incurred by the Pinelands Commission in its statutorily mandated review of development applications in the Pinelands,” said John C. Stokes, Executive Director of the Pinelands Commission.

Since April 2004, the Pinelands Commission has charged application fees as a means to cover a portion of the costs associated with reviewing development applications and related services that support the development application process. In Fiscal year 2007, the Commission expended approximately \$1,479,000 on its application review functions and recouped \$713,000 in application fee revenue. While expenses have remained relatively stable during the past few years, ranging from \$1,422,000 to \$1,501,000 annually, the percentage of those costs recouped through application fees has dropped, mainly because the number of applications submitted each year has decreased. In Fiscal Year 2008, it is estimated that fee revenues will cover only 32% of the Commission’s permit-related expenses.

During this same period of time, the Commission has had to assume greater responsibility for the review of storm water management plans associated with development applications. The Commission also is increasingly asked to review non-standard wastewater treatment technologies that applications propose as a means to allow more development on an individual parcel of land. Thus, even though the number of development applications submitted for Commission review has dropped in the last several years, the amount of staff time devoted to most application reviews has increased. These circumstances have caused the Commission to re-examine its application fee rates and propose numerous changes designed to more equitably distribute the permitting expenses and to increase the percentage of Commission permit-related expenses recouped through fees.

Prior to charging application fees, the Commission relied on a combination of legislative appropriations, interest income and other miscellaneous revenues to fund its permitting applications. Since legislative appropriations represented the vast majority of the available funding, these costs were borne by the taxpayers of New Jersey rather than by the developer, property owner or beneficiaries of the development.

(MORE)

Pinelands Press Release

Page 2...

The Commission is proposing to assess a \$200 fee for single family dwellings; increase rates for residential subdivisions; increase rates for linear development; increase rates for mining operations; assess a moderate fee for public development; assess a surcharge for “alternative” wastewater technology reviews and maintain current rates for commercial and industrial developments.

The following chart compares current and proposed fees for several illustrative development applications:

Development Application	Current Fee	Proposed Fee
Single family dwelling	\$0	\$200
50-lot residential subdivision	\$6,250	\$11,150
15-mile electric transmission line	\$9,091	\$13,636
20-acre resource extraction application	\$700	\$2,100
15,000-square foot municipal building	\$0	\$9,375

Today’s vote authorizes Pinelands Commission staff to begin the rule amendment process. A rule proposal is expected to be published in the New Jersey Register, which will be followed by a 60-day public comment period and a public hearing.

A copy of the rule proposal will be available on the Pinelands Commission’s web site (www.nj.gov/pinelands).

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