

1 OFFICE OF SMART GROWTH
2 CROSS-ACCEPTANCE III PUBLIC HEARING
3 HUDSON COUNTY

3 Re:)
4) TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
5)

6 Hudson County Administration Building
7 Freeholders Chambers
8 567 Pavonia Avenue
9 Third Floor
10 Jersey City, New Jersey
11 Wednesday, January 31, 2007
12 7:00 p.m.

13 BEFORE:

14 EILEEN SWAN, Chairwoman
15 Executive Director, Office of Smart
16 Growth

17 BENJAMIN SPINELLI, Chief Counsel
18 Office of Smart Growth

19 STEPHEN MARKS, Director
20 Hudson County Division of Planning

21 LORISSA WHITAKER, Area Planner
22 Office of Smart Growth

23 JOHN ESKILSON

24 KENNETH ALBERT
25 Reported by:
Mark Weinberg

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31 □

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2 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: In accordance with
3 the requirements of the Open Public Meetings
4 Act, notice of the date, time and place of
5 this meeting has been given by sending written

6 notice to the Secretary of State of the state
7 of New Jersey and to the following newspapers:
8 The Atlantic City Press, The Asbury Park
9 Press, The Bergen Record, The Camden Courier-
10 Post, The Home News Tribune, The Hudson
11 Review, The Newark Star Ledger, The Trentonian
12 and The Trenton Times. Further, by posting
13 notice of this meeting at the office of the
14 Secretary of State, Trenton, New Jersey. I'd
15 also like to inform you that all state
16 planning rules have been complied with.

17 Good evening and welcome everybody
18 to the Cross-Acceptance public hearing in
19 Hudson County. This is part of our
20 negotiations and I'm delighted to see you all
21 here this evening. Thank you for coming.

22 I would like to start by going
23 around and asking everybody to introduce
24 themselves and the reason for this is because
25 the stenographer has asked me to make sure □

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2 that everybody's microphone is working. So,
3 starting here at my right with state planning
4 commission members.

5 COMMISSIONER ALBERT: Kenneth
6 Albert.

7 COMMISSIONER ESKILSON: My name is
8 John Eskilson. My day job is county
9 administrator up in Sussex County but for fun
10 I do this.

11 MR. MARKS: Stephen Marks, Hudson
12 County Planning.

13 MR. SPINELLI: Ben Spinelli from the
14 Office of Smart Growth.

15 MR. WHITAKER: Lorissa Whitaker from
16 the Office of Smart Growth.

17 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Thank you. Also,
18 we have some state agency members in the
19 audience here. I'd like to ask you to
20 introduce yourselves again. If you'd use the
21 mike behind you, that way we can check that
22 out. And as part of the -- they're part of
23 the negotiating committee here this evening.
24 DEP has a vote on the state planning
25 commission. □

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2 MS. TRUESDALE: Veda Truesdale,
3 Department of Environmental Protection.

4 MR. PURDIE: Bill Purdie, Department
5 of Environmental Protection.

6 MS. RUBIN: Helene Rubin, New Jersey
7 Department of Transportation.

8 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Thank you very
9 much.

10 COMMISSIONER ESKILSON: But they do
11 still only get one vote. They don't --
12 regardless of how many people you bring here.
13 Okay.

14 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: And I would like
15 to call on the county executive -- county --
16 sorry. I know, I just drew a blank there --
17 Tom DeGise to come and to speak to us. Thank
18 you.

19 MR. DEGISE: Thank you. And welcome

20 to Hudson County, to all of you, that is. If
21 you had any problems coming in here today, and
22 Eileen told me that you did, that means we
23 need more infrastructure so we'll start, you
24 know, right with that.

25 But we welcome you to our wonderful □

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2 county and I understand that this is your
3 second meeting of the twenty-one that you'll
4 be having over the next few months here and we
5 appreciate your coming up here and listening
6 to some of our concerns.

7 You know, I guess every county you
8 go to will say they're somewhat unique. And
9 in many ways they are. But we really mean it
10 in Hudson County when we say that we're
11 unique. And I'm probably not telling anybody
12 anything that they don't know but we are one
13 of the smallest counties by land mass and one
14 of the largest by population. We're probably
15 the most densely populated county in the
16 entire nation at this point and probably the
17 most diverse. You're about a quarter of a
18 mile from Dickenson High School, a place where
19 I used to work, where there are over 3200
20 students there and fifty-six different
21 languages are spoken.

22 And this is part of our mosaic.
23 This is part of our pride. This is why we
24 love being in Hudson County but it also brings
25 with it a certain set of problems with it that □

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2 I hope you'll take into account. You know, I
3 know that there are people from Smart Growth
4 here. And, you know, in Hudson County I think
5 you're going to find a little bit of a
6 different attitude than you will find in many
7 of the other counties in that with Smart
8 Growth we want growth. We want development.
9 We're not going to be asking you buy any farms
10 to keep people out. We want people to come
11 here.

12 If you've been down on our
13 waterfront, the sixth largest buildings in the
14 state of New Jersey are in Hudson County and
15 in Jersey City. When you come over the skyway
16 approaching here or any of the different
17 approaches from parts of Jersey and you start
18 seeing the New York skyline in the horizon,
19 most of the buildings that you're seeing are
20 in Jersey City. You don't realize that when
21 you're far away. But the Goldman Sachs
22 building is probably the preeminent building
23 in the entire New York City -- the Hudson
24 River waterfront.

25 This is something we're very proud □

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2 of. We're proud of the fact that Hudson
3 County has been the economic engine that has
4 driven the state of New Jersey probably for
5 the last several decades. And we hope to be
6 able to continue that now. And it has spread
7 not only from the Gold Coast where those tall

8 buildings are but to all of Hudson County.
9 You may be aware that in Bayonne, the former
10 military ocean base is now called The
11 Peninsula in Bayonne and it is over two
12 hundred acres of development, mixed use
13 development that is going on right now. They
14 need some support. They need some
15 infrastructure support.

16 Off of the Passaic River in
17 Harrison, there is an exciting project that
18 will bring professional sports for the first
19 time into Hudson County with the Red Bull
20 project, something that the county is very
21 proud to be participating in. In Secaucus,
22 there's a transit village right off of the new
23 turnpike exit near a county park there that
24 will bring in thousands of new residents into
25 that sleepy town as well as a lot of new □

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2 businesses.

3 And the continued growth along the
4 Hudson River is now being complemented by very
5 deep interest in our Hackensack River
6 waterfront, particularly in Jersey City where
7 many of the contaminated lands -- they were
8 former factories -- are being ready for
9 development that we should be able to see.

10 We're not foolish here. You know, I
11 was council president in Jersey City from 1993
12 to 2001 when a great deal of that development
13 in Jersey City actually saw the fruit of some
14 plants that were made a little bit earlier.

15 And any of this development needs to be
16 supported particularly with infrastructure. I
17 can't tell you the impact that the light rail
18 has had upon that growth. You know, it's not
19 a coincidence that wherever the light rail
20 goes good things happen behind it. There is
21 investment; there is improvement. And the
22 city has redefined itself mainly through that.
23 And now, it is going from Bayonne and there's
24 plans to take it down -- 8th Street, Stephen?

25 MR. MARKS: Yes. □

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2 MR. DEGISE: Is that right? You're
3 a little bit closer to Staten Island and the
4 Bayonne Bridge and it is all the way into
5 Tonnelle Avenue in North Bergen. We would
6 like to see a continuance of that and some
7 spurs, particularly at The Peninsula in
8 Bayonne in a continued way to head it out
9 towards the Meadowlands and the new projects
10 that are going there with the Xanadu or
11 whatever it's going to be out there, so that
12 our people, our diverse population, has a
13 chance at the jobs that are being created
14 there and some of the traffic you may have run
15 into on your way in here will be diverted so
16 that people can have Park 'n Ride somewhere
17 out in Meadowlands. And it would stop some of
18 the downside of the development we have seen
19 by bringing in a little too many cars.

20 You know, my administration has
21 prided itself, and it's four years old at this

22 point, in not only being a spur for
23 development which we've tried to do but we've
24 also tried to provide a balance by providing
25 some much needed open space here. We have for □

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2 the -- we were the last of the twenty-one
3 counties to go to an open space trust fund and
4 that has proven itself to be very successful.
5 And it's still a little bit young but we've
6 succeeded in putting parks in places like
7 Guttenberg that never had a municipal park
8 before. And we're continuing that under
9 Stephen's tutelage, you know, with our board
10 of trustees of the open space to try to become
11 even more aggressive in acquiring land not
12 just for development but for open space. And
13 for that we need a continued commitment not
14 only to the urban areas and the rural areas of
15 New Jersey but to the urban areas that need --
16 that have a need for open space probably more
17 so than anybody else. We've become dependent
18 the Green Acres fundings that have been
19 available to us and we need even more of that.

20 So, I hope that when you file your
21 report, you'll enjoy -- you'll remember that
22 you enjoyed your time in Hudson County and you
23 will be able to take some of the unique
24 features, some of the beauty and some of the
25 problems, that we encounter here every day and □

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2 be able to lend us a helping hand. We're

3 trying to do things that other counties don't
4 want to do. We want to grow. We want to
5 continue to attract the best investment and
6 your help would make that a whole lot
7 easier -- make our job a whole lot easier.
8 Thank you very much for being here. If
9 there's any questions for me, I will be glad
10 to take them.

11 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Any questions?

12 MR. DEGISE: Thank you very much.
13 Enjoy your stay in Hudson.

14 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Thank you very
15 much, sir. Well, just to get a start of this
16 evening, I just want to run through where we
17 are. This is the second of our public
18 hearings. It is also part of the negotiation
19 under Cross-Acceptance. So, all comments that
20 are made this evening will be taken back to
21 the office and shared with the full membership
22 of the state planning commission. And nothing
23 is fully decided at this point. Nothing is
24 written in stone for any one of the twenty-one
25 counties. Nothing is written in stone until □

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2 the state planning commission make the
3 final -- take action on the final adoption of
4 the state plan. So there's plenty of
5 opportunity still for public comment and for
6 your comments to be included in negotiation.

7 We do believe, however, that we're
8 fortunate enough with many of the counties,
9 Hudson being one, to have reached a high level

10 of agreement. And as you will see by the
11 information in the negotiation worksheets that
12 are before you this evening, there's only one
13 item where we still have what we term a
14 disagreement. And there's a rationale for
15 that as well.

16 So, we're happy that to date we've
17 worked out a lot of the kinks with the various
18 counties on the planning areas and why things
19 are changing one way or the other. We are
20 very grateful for the work of Stephen and his
21 staff who have worked with us in Hudson
22 County. We're also very grateful to the
23 members of the different state agencies that
24 work with us, in particular, those that are
25 here with us this evening. □

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2 I am the executive director of the
3 Office of Smart Growth and just to let you
4 know who our staff are here tonight, Ben
5 Spinelli to my left is general counsel for the
6 office and director of policy and this is a
7 sort of policy-led planning office. And Ben
8 also leads Cross-Acceptance.

9 Lorissa Whitaker over here is the
10 area planner. She also looks after -- I've
11 never really come across anybody as organized
12 as Lorissa. We're extremely grateful to have
13 her in our office because she keeps us
14 organized when it comes to Cross-Acceptance.
15 It's very difficult to schedule all the
16 meetings, keep everything posted on the

17 website, make sure that we have the absolute
18 optimum opportunity for public involvement in
19 the process. And it's because of people like
20 Lorissa who are incredibly professional at
21 their planning but also have these kinds of
22 skills that they lend to the office to make
23 sure that we're offering the best
24 opportunities for all to be involved in this
25 very important process. □

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2 So, with that, I'd like to hand over
3 now to -- oh, before -- I'm sorry. Before I
4 do that, we do ask that those who wish to
5 comment have signed up and I'll call you out
6 in the order that you have signed to make
7 comment, but given that it's a small group
8 this evening, this should be easy. We do ask
9 for a three-minute comment period. Again,
10 obviously we're going to be relaxed. If
11 somebody wants to speak again, of course
12 you'll be asked to do so -- and invited to do
13 so. If you haven't signed the card to speak,
14 don't worry. When I finished with the four
15 that have signed up, I'll offer the
16 opportunity to anybody else on the floor that
17 would like to speak.

18 With that, I'd like to hand over to
19 Benjamin Spinelli who will give you an
20 overview of Hudson County Cross-Acceptance
21 process and an overview in general of the
22 state plan and the direction the Office of
23 Smart Growth and our state agency partners are

24 taking that.

25 MR. SPINELLI: Thanks, Eileen. Good □

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2 evening, everyone. Right now we're in the
3 process of updating the state plan which was
4 last passed by the state planning commission
5 in 2001. The Cross-Acceptance process is the
6 means by which we gather information from
7 twenty-one counties and the 566 municipalities
8 of New Jersey and have their input into the
9 state plan. At the same time, we take input
10 from the various state agencies and
11 departments to try to come up with a cohesive
12 plan for New Jersey to plan its future. So
13 it's an incredibly challenging task because of
14 the diversity of our state.

15 Tonight we're here in Hudson County,
16 the most densely populated county in the
17 state, the most urbanized county in --
18 probably in the nation. And Monday night we
19 were down in Atlanta county, an extremely
20 rural county. And we have to come up with a
21 plan that can provide guidance for that broad
22 a diversity of communities. At the same time,
23 New Jersey is facing a number of challenges,
24 both economic and environmental. Because we
25 are the most densely populated state as a □

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2 whole, we place a great strain on both the
3 natural resources that we depend upon, the
4 infrastructure that supports human activity in

5 our state. It becomes a real financial
6 burden. We have the highest property tax
7 burden in the nation. And trying to find a
8 way to finance all of those things is a real
9 challenge.

10 So the state plan, as we envision it
11 going forward, is going to be a guidance tool
12 not only for how municipalities and counties
13 should be planning their future but also how
14 the state should be planning its investments
15 going forward to make the most efficient use
16 of its dollars and to get the greatest effect
17 and to create a broad range of on the ground
18 results that we need to remain a sustainable,
19 healthy, economically thriving state which New
20 Jersey has always been.

21 Right now, as Eileen said, we're at
22 the second of our public meetings. The Cross-
23 Acceptance process is extremely complicated
24 only because we're trying our best to get the
25 most public input that we can into the □

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2 process. For the twenty-one counties, we've
3 had a series of -- we're planning a series of
4 four meetings for each of those counties. The
5 first, being an internal meeting at the Office
6 of Smart Growth where we go over a negotiation
7 agenda that's primarily been prepared by the
8 county planners in each of the counties.
9 Before tonight, we were provided with a series
10 of issues that the Hudson County planning
11 staff felt was extremely important for us to

12 include in the state plan for Hudson County's
13 interest. Every county did that. Hudson
14 County's was relatively limited in number and
15 they were really limited to policy issues
16 alone. As you go through the twenty-one
17 counties, some of the counties literally
18 submitted dozens of policy issues and dozens
19 of issues on the state planning map. We don't
20 have a copy of the state planning map here.
21 Tonight we have a copy of the state planning
22 map as it pertains to Hudson County. But the
23 state plan has a diversity of planning areas,
24 numbered 1 through 5, basically from the most
25 environmentally sensitive areas of the state □

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2 to the areas of the state that are the most
3 urban where we're trying to encourage growth
4 to occur. All of Hudson County is within
5 planning area 1.

6 What we do at the Office of Smart
7 Growth after going over those issues, we come
8 up with responses to the issues that were
9 brought up by the counties. We then vet those
10 issues in a second meeting through the various
11 state agencies who are interested, primarily
12 the Department of Environmental Protection,
13 the Department of Agriculture, the Department
14 of Transportation and the Department of
15 Commerce have all been active participants in
16 the Cross-Acceptance process. They helped us
17 formulate our responses to the county's
18 issues. Following that, we've had staff to

19 staff meetings with all of the counties.
20 Right now we're in -- our tenth staff to staff
21 meeting was just completed yesterday, so we
22 still have eleven to go. And then following
23 the staff to staff meetings we've moved on to
24 the public hearings and as we roll through
25 them we're now in our second public hearing, □

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2 Atlantic County having been the first Monday
3 night; tonight, here in Hudson County.
4 Of all the staff to staff meetings
5 we've had so far, even though the number of
6 issues were very limited with Hudson County,
7 it turned out to be an incredibly lively
8 conversation with your representatives and
9 they do an excellent job of representing
10 Hudson County's interests. We spent probably
11 two and a half hours going over the seven
12 issues that were in disag -- that we were in
13 disagreement with at the time and we were able
14 to resolve all but one of those disagreements.
15 They were solely policy driven and the hard
16 part is that we can't really come up with
17 final responses at this period of time because
18 we can't come up with a formulated response
19 until we've been through all twenty-one
20 counties. The hard part is this can't be a
21 Hudson County plan just as it can't be the
22 Atlanta County plan. It has to be a plan that
23 works for all of the state and that, as I said
24 before, is our biggest challenge.
25 We'll talk a little bit tonight □

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2 about the issues -- Stephen, I'm sure, will
3 bring up the substance of what we talked about
4 and what is still outstanding. But just let
5 me give you some insight into where this
6 information is going to go.

7 The state plan as it exists right
8 now, we feel, is not a very useful document.
9 It has a lot of good information in it;
10 however, we think that it's not usable. We're
11 going to change basically the format of the
12 state plan when it comes out at the end of
13 2007 after we've incorporated all of the
14 information that we were able to gather here.
15 And the format of the state plan is going to
16 resemble far more closely with what a
17 municipal master plan looks like. That's so
18 that the people who are charged with using it,
19 the county municipal planners across the state
20 and the various state agencies, will see
21 something that they're familiar with. It will
22 have elements that range from agriculture to
23 transportation to economic development
24 addressing all the broad range of issues that
25 New Jersey will have to face going forward for □

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2 the next ten years.

3 That brings me to another point is
4 that the current state planning process is
5 supposed to be repeated every three years.
6 You see right now, 2001 state plan not being

7 updated till 2007. So, first of all, that
8 period of time is far too short for the
9 complex nature that the updates have to meet.
10 Secondly, we feel it's too short of a horizon
11 for planning. We would like the state plan
12 period of time for updating to mirror the
13 census data that comes out. That would be
14 every ten years plus two. So the next state
15 plan update would be 2012 and the next one
16 after that would be 2022. So that when the
17 state plan is updated, it's updated based upon
18 good hard information that will feed into it
19 and there will be a rational basis for the
20 updates that the state plan will contain.

21 So, with that, I'll turn it back
22 over to Stephen and he can give you the
23 overview of how Hudson County viewed the
24 process so far.

25 MR. MARKS: I hope you don't mind. □

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2 I had an excellent PowerPoint presentation
3 which took hours to prepare and Murphy's Law
4 being what it is, I couldn't -- I pushed the
5 wrong button and it went somewhere else. But
6 I'm going to at least take my cues from the
7 laptop computer here so I hope nobody minds.
8 I don't want to show anybody my back so --
9 Again, to just reiterate, Madam
10 Chair, Commissioners, welcome to Hudson
11 County. Hudson County supports the state
12 plan. We were the first county in New Jersey
13 to adopt a county-wide strategic

14 revitalization plan. I think we are still the
15 only county in New Jersey to have a county-
16 wide plan. I believe there are some multi-
17 municipal strategic plans out there but in
18 terms of being an entire county I believe we
19 are still it.

20 COMMISSIONER ESKILSON: Not for
21 long, Steve. We almost caught you. But just
22 about.

23 MR. MARKS: Hudson County supports
24 the state plan's goals, revitalize the state's
25 cities and towns, conserve natural resources □

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2 and systems, promote economic development and
3 growth, promote the -- protect the
4 environment, provide public services at a
5 reasonable cost, provide housing at a
6 reasonable cost, preserve historic and
7 cultural areas and ensure an integrated
8 planning statewide.

9 The Jersey Journal recently, which
10 is Hudson County's main daily newspaper,
11 published ten -- and it's visually attractive
12 and I'm just sorry nobody can see it -- but
13 they published a list of ten projects to watch
14 in 2007. And I'm just going to filter through
15 that.

16 The Powerhouse Arts District. As
17 the county executive said before, Jersey
18 City -- Hudson County has a marvelous
19 waterfront with a lot of economic activity,
20 economic activity which is actually driving

21 the state's economy. The Powerhouse is an old
22 PATH or Tubes facility to provide power to the
23 old Tubes, which is now the PATH system, the
24 subway system. And Jersey City has been
25 exploring ways to keep the historic nature of □

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2 the Powerhouse as well as to facilitate
3 economic development. And I think they've
4 entertained proposals from developers
5 including Donald Trump and other nationally
6 recognized developers develop on the -- around
7 the Powerhouse Arts District with is in the
8 Exchange Place area.

9 Big boxes on Tonnelle Avenue, as The
10 Jersey Journal said. North Bergen right now
11 is in the process of creating a redevelopment
12 plan to create hundreds of thousands of square
13 feet of new retail space which would be --
14 which would provide further consumer and job
15 opportunities for Hudson County residents.

16 The Hub on MLK. The Martin Luther
17 King Drive area is probably one of the most
18 challenged economically within one of the most
19 challenged areas within Hudson County. And
20 Jersey City has worked diligently to
21 revitalize that area. That's a place to
22 watch.

23 Union City High Schools. Hudson
24 County is, on a district by district basis, is
25 probably the most advocate, thirty-seven □

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2 percentage of our county, of any county in the
3 state. And Union City is very fortunate to
4 get full construction corporation dollars to
5 build a brand new high school, state of the
6 art high school. And they're building that in
7 Hudson County. Many of the school districts
8 county wide are actually using Tabbott funding
9 to build state of the art facilities. Many of
10 our -- because of the older industrial
11 counties, many of our elementary schools and
12 high schools were built a hundred years ago or
13 more. And many of our schools are literally
14 falling apart. And we feel the schools are
15 our further opportunity to attract and
16 maintain some sentimental and supplemental class
17 where people will want to send their kids to
18 school if the school
19 facilities are adequate.

20 Hoboken Redevelopment. Probably in
21 all deference to Jersey City, Hoboken is, in
22 terms of real estate, is one of the hottest
23 markets in New Jersey. It's probably one of
24 the hottest markets nationally. Hoboken right
25 now is looking at the different redevelopment □

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2 areas including the former Maxwell
3 house site. It's exciting, creating
4 thousands of units of new housing.

5 Harrison. As the county executive
6 said before, the Hudson County Improvement
7 Authority and the administration and county
8 executive, Tom DeGise, is actually very -- as

9 well as supporting all of these developments
10 but in very active terms, helping and
11 providing seed money to build a parking deck
12 and garage for the rental professional soccer
13 team. The parking garage will also help
14 facilitate thousands of units of new housing
15 for the Harrison waterfront on Passaic Road.
16 And without the Path station and without the
17 strategic assets that Harrison has, that
18 project could not be sold.

19 The American Cane Company on Jersey
20 City's west side. It's another
21 that will see potentially
22 hundreds if not thousands of units of new
23 housing.

24 The Peninsula at Bayonne Harbor, as the
25 county executive said before, 430 acres of □

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2 prime real estate in the middle of New York
3 Harbor. Bayonne's planning thousands of units
4 of new housing. Approximately 125 acres will
5 be preserved for a future marathon
6 re-use. And it needs active -- the
7 active support of the state of New Jersey and
8 it needs infrastructure like the Hudson Bergen
9 light rail.

10 Journal Square. Right now Hudson
11 County and Jersey City's whole coast is moving
12 inland from the Hudson River waterfront to
13 places like Journal Square. Journal Square is
14 uniquely situated. It's one of the major
15 transit hubs in the state of New Jersey. It's

16 also one of the -- your more traditional
17 central business districts. There are now
18 plans to build thousands of units of new
19 housing in transit village style setup to
20 raise Journal Square for people with hundreds
21 of thousands of square feet of commercial and
22 retail space where people will not have to get
23 in their cars in order to shop and go to work.
24 And they can use the Path station.
25 It's very exciting. □

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2 And finally, the Beacon. The Beacon
3 is the former Jersey City Medical Center which
4 is -- it's a WPA era complex facilities.
5 But the city of Jersey City had owned several
6 buildings, the county had owned several
7 buildings. The Beacon, the former medical
8 center complex, is dilapidated. It's hard to
9 preserve the city. Jersey City, in
10 conjunction with the county, went out and
11 found a developer who was not only willing to
12 create the housing and the revitalization but
13 preserve the facade of the buildings and
14 actually restore it. I believe the site is on
15 the National Register of Historic Places.
16 Very Gotham and very art deco looking
17 and it's going to be an exciting place for
18 people to live.
19 So there's a lot of stuff happening
20 in Hudson County. What's -- as they say --
21 some people say we passed the prologue. Why
22 are we here tonight? What is this all about?

23 We support the state plan. The state plan's
24 Cross-Acceptance process preliminarily was
25 outlined by the Office of Smart Growth in □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 December 2003 and the county executive and the
3 freeholder board authorized the Division of
4 Planning and the Hudson County strategic
5 revitalization committee to go ahead and
6 cooperate with the state planning commission,
7 the Office of Smart Growth and the Cross-
8 Acceptance process to help bring all twelve
9 towns within Hudson County together to
10 facilitate Cross-Acceptance.

11 The Office of Smart Growth adopted
12 its Cross-Acceptance manual in February 2004.
13 The Office of Smart Growth released a
14 preliminary state plan, a document that the
15 Cross-Acceptance process is all about in March
16 2004. Hudson County held its first public
17 hearing in Lincoln Park in June 2004. And
18 Hudson County prepared under consultation with
19 all twelve municipalities -- prepared its
20 Cross-Acceptance report which was released in
21 December of 2004, so it took us approximately
22 six months to prepare.

23 Hudson County held its next public
24 hearing on our Cross-Acceptance report in
25 January 2005, almost two years ago. And □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 Hudson County participated in the negotiation
3 process down in Trenton, facilitated by our

4 comprehensive economic development strategy
5 committe, Mayor Sed's committee in September
6 of 2006. And we're here to basically finish
7 the process.

8 Our Cross-Acceptance report was
9 published and distributed to four
10 municipalities within Hudson County and the
11 last two years we've had our Cross-Acceptance
12 report listed on our website. It's been
13 downloaded by hundreds of people for various
14 purposes. It has basically all the county's
15 policies in relation to the state plan. Two
16 interesting things that are in there are
17 population projections and, as the county
18 executive said before, we embrace growth. We
19 embrace Smart Growth, we embrace
20 redevelopment, we want to morphisize ,
21 we want to revitalize ourselves and we want to
22 grow. We want to take advantage of our
23 strategic assets.

24 The population projections -- in the
25 1999 Strategic Plan, there were -- the □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 projected growth for Hudson County for 2010
3 was 614,000 people and in Harrison, the NJTPA
4 for 2010 projected to have 658,000 people and
5 the New Jersey Department of Labor, in their
6 projection for 2015, had 678,000 people. I
7 think all of these projections are worth
8 noting because we are not shunning away. We
9 are growing. And for forty-six square miles,
10 we are embracing all of the plan developments

11 which is being proposed right now.

12 Likewise, our Cross-Acceptance
13 report has employment projections. The 1999
14 Strategic Plan had an estimate of 352,000 jobs
15 in Hudson County for 2010. I think that was a
16 little too optimistic, a little too high. The
17 NJTPA, by comparison, had 273,000 jobs and the
18 New Jersey Department of Labor for 2010 had
19 282,000 jobs which is probably more
20 reasonable.

21 Hudson County supports the state
22 plan map, we embrace being a PA1. That's part
23 of the planning area with the exception of the
24 Meadowlands district where the state plan
25 doesn't apply. □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07

2 And on negotiation issues, as Ben
3 said before, our issues -- we have through our
4 Cross-Acceptance process, we have identified
5 eight issues. First, was expansion of the
6 light rail system, as the county executive
7 said before. The second, which the county is
8 still very much concerned about, the county
9 administration and all the municipalities, are
10 the affordable housing obligations. We
11 understand that the courts recently threw out
12 the ground rules. We had
13 severe reservations about the rules, how
14 creating one unit -- we understand the need
15 for affordable housing but making the
16 municipalities responsible for creating one
17 unit out of how many? Eight which are

18 permanent -- we didn't think that was the
19 right way to go. And Hudson County's
20 municipalities had a problem because they
21 thought that that rule when implemented in
22 Hudson County would further hold back
23 development. And that's one of the -- it's
24 probably the same goal largest reservation
25 Hudson County's municipalities had with not so □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 much the state plan but state policy.

3 We support the state plan in
4 connecting port commerce and warehousing and
5 the Portway projects with our transportation
6 assets. We support Portway, and the state's plans
7 for Portway. The county right now is in the
8 midst of preparing a foreign trade zone study.
9 We have many acres, thousands of acres, of
10 farm trade zones within the county. It makes
11 the county a viable place to business port-
12 related international trade business. And we
13 want to take -- further take advantage of
14 those assets.

15 Brown field's funding. The county
16 wants to and all municipalities think what the
17 state is doing in terms of site mediation is
18 great. And we're asking the state
19 to just do more. Now, dedicate more funding
20 and more staff for technical assistance and
21 try and expedite its permitting for site
22 mediation on a local level.

23 Open space and Green Acres formula.
24 Hudson County being the most densely populated

1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 probably has the least amount of open space.
3 There's balance to the land standards which
4 the national parks and recreation officials
5 have suggested for county municipalities.
6 Green Acres program has standards which they
7 established for counties and municipalities.
8 New York City has standards which are below
9 that. Hudson County's acreage in terms of its
10 buildable land area and population are well
11 below that of even New York City, New York
12 City's park standards. Hudson County
13 administration, the county executive, in
14 creating the Open Space Trust Fund for the
15 county made a goal settling the amount of open
16 space within the county. Getting to our
17 current inventory of county parks, helping
18 the municipalities with their
19 opportunities within their park systems.

20 The one in terms of a statewide
21 policy, I think the state plan commission
22 should look at the -- it's not a coincidence
23 but the -- it isn't a coincidence, of
24 course -- out of the eighty-eight urban aid
25 municipalities none had an Open State Trust □

1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 Fund. And while the Green Acres program has
3 been very beneficial in supporting those
4 eighty-eight urban aid municipalities, because
5 -- or because their municipalities don't have

6 trust funds they're at a particular
7 disadvantage when trying to make their
8 cities seem littler and more attractive to people
9 who may otherwise live in suburban areas.

10 The county supports the creation of
11 transportation enhancement Districts and
12 the county supports at least exploring the
13 idea of land value taxation, also called site
14 value taxation. In places like Camden
15 where -- or other depressed areas in the state --
16 where either with the help of the state or on the municipal
17 level, municipalities could adopt, assessment
18 formulas which would favor development.
19 Conversely, in the more rural areas, if you
20 decrease the amount of taxes on farmland by
21 basically not tinkering but changing the
22 formula, you could help preserve farmland. So
23 the owners of farms and agricultural areas
24 aren't so ready, willing, and able to make their -
25 - to turn their farms into subdivisions. □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07

2 And finally, the last thing -- it wasn't
3 so much a municipal concern as a private citizen at the public hearing mentio
4 the recent standard for parking
5
6 . The county identified, I
7 believe, in its Cross-Acceptance
8 correspondence the residential site
9 improvement standards for New Jersey are
10 basically a suburban model and we would like
11 to see the recent standards changed to allow
12 urban municipalities to have a slightly different
13 model. Parking

14 standards that were identified at the public
15 hearing a couple years ago, somebody was
16 complaining that they wanted more parking. And
17 if you're right on top of the transit hub, it may not be
18 feasible. Every parking space is going to
19 cost you -- cost the developer probably
20 twenty-eight to thirty thousand dollars to
21 build. In creating more parking in dense
22 urban environments is probably
23 not the way to go as the county executive said
24 before, we support -- Hudson county supports
25 creating sattelite parking out in the □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 burbs for people to get out of the
3 car, get on a bus or a train and then get to
4 the jobs in Hudson County and New York City.

5 Any comments or questions?

6 MR. ESKILSON: I just have a
7 comment. I mentioned earlier I'm from Sussex
8 County but as Stephen knows I was actually
9 born and raised in Hudson County across the
10 Meadows in Kearny. My parents are still
11 there. And so I didn't really need the
12 pictures because I know every one of those
13 sites you talked about. It was really
14 wonderful to hear those names again and truly
15 exciting to hear about what is happening in
16 Hudson County and to hear the passion of the
17 county executive on the subject. So I
18 congratulate you and I think as a state
19 planning commission member, the state planning
20 commission really needs to focus on how we can

21 assist urban New Jersey in realizing their
22 vision.

23 It's been kind of a missing piece --
24 I've been with the commission five years and a
25 lot of focus on open space issues and rural □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 areas like where I come from now. But I think
3 to close this deal and make the state plan
4 work the way it was truly intention to work,
5 we have to focus on growth and we have to
6 focus on helping you realize the vision.

7 Wonderful job and I'm really excited
8 about the prospect of working with you all.

9 MR. ALBERT: The growth share -- it
10 does appear from the Court decision that the
11 growth share will stand. What kind of impact
12 do you think that will have on Hudson County?

13 MR. MARKS: The fact that the --
14 Hudson County can account -- two
15 municipalities, Harrison and Bayonne are
16 facing it head on. And I think they've made
17 provisions and we have Samantha Bono here
18 from Bayonne who could go into details.
19 But they are expecting a
20 percentage if the package and finances, a certain
21 percentage of the taxes that come in
22 from development or outright payments
23 from the developers for the creation of
24 affordable housing.

25 I'm not aware -- doesn't mean it's □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07

2 not happening -- I'm not aware of any of the
3 other towns really being that proactive.
4 So our concern -- my concern
5 is that with all of the thousands of units of
6 housing that are being zoned and approved
7 without much -- any components of
8 affordability it will create a huge obligation
9 for the municipalities and the municipalities
10 are already cash strapped. In urban areas
11 everybody's facing the
12 property tax dilemma. But I'm
13 not sure if at the end of the day the -- any
14 municipality but urban municipalities will be
15 able to afford to create all the affordable
16 housing which will be their obligation because
17 of the creation of all the market rate
18 housing. And if they do -- I'm not sure
19 how Bayonne and Harrison, how it may be
20 affecting their developments. If they do, I'm
21 not sure if the markets would then lead or if
22 the housing market would have more
23 difficulties or think twice about
24 then developing in those areas.

25 I was just telling some major □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 concerns.

3 MR. ALBERT: It's a tough one. It's
4 a diff --

5 MR. MARKS: You don't have a place
6 to walk and we're not quite sure what the
7 result is going to be.

8 MR. ALBERT: Have you used eminent

9 domain for any of these projects?

10 MR. MARKS: I'm sure there's eminent
11 domain involved in some. Off the top of my
12 head, I don't think so.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

14 They used it on my property in Harrison,
15 yes.

16 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: We will get to
17 you, sir, and we can hear more of the letter.
18 Finish up, Stephen. Any more questions or
19 comments? Okay. Thank you very much,
20 Stephen.

21 MR. MARKS: Thank you.

22 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Okay, now we are
23 going to listen to comments from the public
24 and as I've stated at the beginning of the
25 meeting, be aware that we will be listening to □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 these comments and taking them back as well
3 for further consideration with the other
4 agencies. And I'll start with M. Crowley.
5 And if when you come up if you could spell
6 your name for the stenographer, please.

7 MS. CROWLEY: It's Maureen Crowley,
8 C-R-O-W-L-E-Y. I'm a resident of Jersey City
9 and I'm involved in several non-profit groups
10 mostly concerned with historic preservation,
11 open space, the environment and the East Coast
12 Greenland. And I guess, I'm not really
13 prepared for this meeting. I tried to find
14 more information about this and I was kind of
15 stymied. I'm actually wondering if you

16 have -- obviously, these negotiation
17 worksheets are in response to a draft state
18 plan, is that correct?

19 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: The plan from
20 Hudson is on the table here.

21 MS. CROWLEY: Right. Just the
22 Hudson plan. But is there also a draft state
23 plan or are you just collecting county plans
24 at this point?

25 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: We're working off □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 the 2001 state plan.

3 MS. CROWLEY: That's what I thought
4 because that's the only thing I could find on
5 the website.

6 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Right.

7 MS. CROWLEY: Okay. I guess -- you
8 know, I'm involved in a group that started
9 eight years ago in response to a governmental
10 decision to buy a transportation corridor and
11 turn it over to a developer and we said, wait
12 a minute. You know, that doesn't make sense.
13 And we began a very involved process of
14 reaching out to all our governmental officials
15 on every level of government about it and
16 finding out where the possibilities in terms
17 of saving that corridor. And as recently as a
18 year or two ago, we looked into the
19 possibility of light rail in that corridor and
20 were told no, it wasn't a possibility. What
21 we did was go after open space funds and line
22 up all the open space funds that we could find

23 and we now have enough for the city of Jersey
24 City to buy this corridor but it looks as if
25 they're turning their backs on that money and □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 now are promoting light rail, the Hudson
3 Bergen light rail over this corridor.

4 When I saw this item in the state
5 plan, it seems to me to be supporting that
6 initiative which flies in the face of eight
7 years of citizen involvement in trying to
8 protect the Corridor. I think it's a kind of
9 friction if this is going to be used for light
10 rail along this Corridor because there was a
11 previous study done about it, the Bergen
12 Arches study, and during intense public
13 involvement, it was discussed that there were
14 real operational problems with bringing light
15 rail over the embankment.

16 So -- but I guess this is very
17 detailed for you and I know you're looking at
18 broad brush kinds of things, but when you have
19 a broad brush entry in your state plan
20 supporting HBLRT access to the Meadowlands
21 sports complex and Xanadu development, I look
22 at that and think this is supporting something
23 that is going to possibly deep six our long
24 project, citizen initiated and sustained over
25 eight years that have so far saved that □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 Corridor.

3 So, I get back to a general

4 question. Every planning document I've ever
5 read when I started having to be interested in
6 planning nine years ago talks about citizen
7 involvement. But how many citizens do you see
8 here? I think most people here are probably
9 connected with an agency of some kind. I know
10 dozens and dozens of citizens groups in Jersey
11 City who would like to know about this
12 particular item, who would like to know about
13 the parking item. I don't think they have any
14 idea that this is going on right now. So,
15 when you say, you know -- I love it. It used
16 to be that planning documents would talk about
17 citizen involvement somewhere along the way.
18 Now, it's always the first thing which is
19 planning ethic. Planning should begin with
20 citizens. But how are you actually
21 implementing it and make sure that the people
22 who really care about their communities and
23 not looking at -- well, I won't go -- I won't
24 even say -- really care about their
25 communities, who care about historic □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 preservation, open space, want to see it as a
3 higher priority in Hudson County. Most
4 environmentalists here want to protect the
5 rural areas of our state. I grew up in Sussex
6 County. I want you to save that Sussex
7 County. But they also don't want to live in a
8 metropolis of towering buildings with no open
9 space, no local open space, and only organized
10 spors fields for people that further divorce

11 the children in our community from nature. We
12 don't want to get on a light rail to go to an
13 entertainment complex which is considered
14 recreation for the people that are enshrined
15 in these tall buildings and just have
16 concrete. So, I really wish that you would
17 very carefully think about that and try to
18 make more of an effort to meet with just
19 ordinary citizens.

20 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Thank you very
21 much for your comments, Ms. Crowley. I will
22 tell you that this process starts at the
23 municipal level and the municipalities meet to
24 discuss Cross-Acceptance and they, the
25 negotiating agent for them, is indeed the □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 county. So the involvement here starts at a
3 municipal level and those that are engaged
4 with their own planning boards and engaged in
5 their own master planning, that can have an
6 impact on what is then asked of the county
7 because the county carries the message to the
8 Office of Smart Growth. And we do see great
9 public involvement and great public activities
10 at our public hearings, our public meetings,
11 and if you look at the agenda here you'll see
12 more opportunities for us to take comment.

13 The difficulties often are the
14 balancing of the two areas you're talking
15 about. On one side, trying to be energy
16 efficient and relieving the congestion on our
17 roads which is an issue --

18 MS. CROWLEY: Yes.

19 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: -- and offering
20 mass transport which has the answer to so many
21 of the complex issues. On the other hand, and
22 you're speaking to somebody who worked for
23 Garden State Greenways and who was known as
24 the Garden State Greenways ambassador and
25 actually came to Hudson County to talk about □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 preservation and funding opportunities.

3 So we try to present both sides of
4 that in the state plan and you will see
5 policies that relate to preservation and
6 protection of resources even to getting down
7 to the pocket parks in communities such as the
8 whole area of Hudson County. We do care about
9 both sides but we have to also meet the needs
10 of both sides and have the policies in place
11 so that you can have mass transportation and
12 all the good that it brings and all the good
13 that it brings from an environmental
14 perspective as well, and at the same time
15 recognize the needs and try to get
16 preservation and try to get access for all
17 residents to public places, both the
18 recreational in the active sense and the
19 passive sense as well.

20 And so we certainly make the effort
21 to reach both sides but I will tell you that
22 it's complex and it's difficult and it's just
23 as Ben was going around saying was we go
24 around the state one county has one vision,

25 another county has another. By the end of □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 this process, we bring in comments like yours
3 to the state planning commission. We have to
4 make general statements on policies throughout
5 the state. The state plan itself is sort of a
6 broad brush, as you would put it, framework.
7 The opportunity to get down to work on the
8 more specific issues is the process known as
9 plan endorsement where we really work with
10 communities to balance where they should grow
11 and how they manage the growth and at the same
12 time look to protections and open spaces and
13 farm preservation.

14 And so, I would encourage you as
15 well in your communities to talk about plan
16 endorsement as the next step after Cross-
17 Acceptance.

18 MS. CROWLEY: Right. I think that
19 no thinking citizen of this area would be
20 against mass transit. It's just that they're
21 in the competition. It seems that open space
22 is losing.

23 MR. SPINELLI: Eileen, if I could
24 just add. During the Cross-Acceptance staff
25 to staff meeting with the Hudson County □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 representatives, they were extremely strong
3 advocates for finding ways to provide for open
4 space opportunities, recreational and just
5 plain open space opportunities to be

6 integrated into the planning of this very
7 urban county. They were extremely strong in
8 their advocacy for that issue.

9 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Your comments are
10 duly noted and we do thank you. Forgive me if
11 I mispronounce names. Susan Denharden?
12 Please. And again, if you could spell your
13 name for the stenographer.

14 MS. DENHERDER: My name is Susan
15 Denherder, D-E-N-H-E-R-D-E-R. I'd like to
16 speak -- we've heard about hot markets tonight
17 and I want to talk about some hot people who
18 are not ordinarily many consider so hot but
19 they're people that I am connected with and
20 maybe some of you are already preaching to the
21 converted. I did partly come to talk to the
22 people in Hudson County to say first of all, I
23 represent some of the people in this county
24 who are paying more than one-third of their
25 rent for housing. It's a difficult situation. □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 And looking at the figures in your report that
3 fifteen percent of the county is considered
4 poverty level, I just want to urge everyone to
5 keep that affordable housing issue current.

6 I understand that there are
7 difficulties getting people to develop
8 affordable housing when there are many -- many
9 ways to make much more money. Nevertheless,
10 we have so many people with affordable housing
11 needs and if they -- we want to ask two
12 questions. One is, you may not be able to

13 afford affordable housing but can you not
14 afford affordable housing considering the
15 needs of the poor, the elderly and those who
16 live here make a large contribution, not
17 considered so hot, nevertheless make a large
18 contribution to this county itself.

19 If what is stated in the rules is
20 not the right way to go, we want to know what
21 the right way to go is. We want to know
22 what's being done. I teach at Hudson County
23 Community College. There is a lot of energy
24 in our students. There are a lot of needs --
25 there are a lot of needs and there are a lot □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 of aspirations, a lot of people coming to
3 college for the first person in their family,
4 and there's a lot of cynicism about what the
5 government and about can we appeal to anyone
6 for any help.

7 So, sorry. One of the questions
8 that I ask my composition class is do you --
9 sir, what do you see is the most important
10 concern on that need in your community? And
11 among the young people what one thing most
12 needs to be done? Housing was one of the
13 things mentioned. I want to go on to my --
14 okay. Housing is there. Second concern.
15 When I ask them what they thought was the most
16 important need, unmet need among young people,
17 a lot of them talked about communication.
18 Parental matters. Being heard. But almost in
19 equal number talked about activities for young

20 people. And I know that there's some mention
21 of that in the goals but we haven't heard and
22 I'd like to second Ms. Crowley's plea for
23 communication, that there is more interaction,
24 more conversation, and more sense for those
25 young people. Whose cynicism will possibly be □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 addressed if they have a sense that they can
3 affect what's going on that they can have a
4 role in this process and I would ask that
5 there be reaching out so that they can play
6 that part. I would like particularly to see
7 them active in some of the -- some of the
8 opportunities, some of the ways that ordinary
9 people who are important really have a lot of
10 energy and a lot of concerns can play a role.

11 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Could I ask you to
12 end up now?

13 MS. DENHERDER: Yes. Okay.

14 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Thank you very
15 much.

16 MS. DENHERDER: Okay. And I want --
17 and one more sentence?

18 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Certainly.

19 MS. DENHERDER: Okay. Thank you.
20 And the third item that I wanted to mention is
21 that I met once with Mr. DeGise about some
22 young people in this county who are very
23 concerned with sustainability and want to
24 second every effort that's made for that --
25 those corridors, those bikeways and those -- □

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2 the sustainable efforts in this county.

3 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Thank you very
4 much for your comments and be assured they are
5 heard. We certainly care about affordable
6 housing. It's a need in the state. For
7 economic redevelopment you need housing of all
8 the ranges available so we'll continue to work
9 on these issues and have -- again, maybe these
10 young people could look to the website, look
11 at the state plan. The opportunity to get
12 involved is more apparent at the local level
13 once again because this is a great home rule
14 state. They can go to their local planning
15 board, they can have their voices heard at the
16 local level which is where you really can
17 impact change, the kind of change you're
18 speaking to. But again, we thank you for
19 coming here tonight and for your passion and
20 your comments. Samantha Bono?

21 MS. BONO: Hi. How you all doing?
22 My name is Samantha Bono. That's B-O-N-O. I
23 am a city planner with the city of Bayonne and
24 I also work for the economic development
25 corporation there. I'd like to first thank □

2 Steve Marks and all those at Hudson County
3 Planning because the summary of items here
4 pretty much sums up all of the concerns
5 Bayonne has had and is currently dealing with.

6 I guess the two biggies that I'd
7 like to point out is to again comment on

8 co-own but in a different direction. We
9 obviously as a city understand the need for
10 affordable housing and I've always from the
11 best of my knowledge, strive to create that in
12 any way possible. However, we are more
13 concerned from a legal and planning standpoint
14 as to how the recent appellate court decision
15 in throwing out the co-estate regulations will
16 affect our city, particularly with regards to
17 our own fair share plan that was developed
18 with those former rules in mind. And we want
19 the state and the county to keep cities like
20 Bayonne in mind who have taken as many steps
21 as possible to accommodate those rules that
22 were set in advance. It's a lot harder for a
23 city to go back and change all of that because
24 it was so hard to get it done in the first
25 place. It's slow but at the same token we □

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1 Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing - 1/31/07
2 want to do our best and we want to supply our
3 citizens with as many opportunities as
4 possible.

5 The second point was, particularly
6 with regards to the item about creating
7 Brownfields as our way of preserving open
8 space. We have a lot of Brownfields in
9 Bayonne which we don't view as a bad thing.
10 You know? There is a lot of opportunities to
11 redevelop areas but redeveloping needs funding
12 and we've been lucky enough to receive funding
13 from the state and the federal government on a
14 couple of different projects but there was a

15 lot of slow down in the process of getting
16 that because of the interpretation of how the
17 former Kelo state decision was interpreted by
18 the DEP, for instance, and other state
19 agencies. We want to make sure that the state
20 keeps, again, cities like Bayonne in mind that
21 have these needs to redevelop areas in order
22 to preserve and bring in open space because we
23 do require our developers to provide a
24 significant amount of open space when we
25 redevelop areas. To try to keep us in mind □

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2 and not make it a catch 22 for us to get that
3 funding and how certain properties are
4 eligible or not eligible is a huge problem or
5 challenge, I should say, for the city of
6 Bayonne.

7 So those are our two primaries right
8 there, but -- again, thank you so much for
9 your time and thank you again to Hudson County
10 Planning and Steve Marks. I appreciate.

11 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Thank you, Ms.
12 Bono. We will take your comments back to COA
13 and we do appreciate the hard work. We
14 understand because we certainly promote a
15 proactive approach to facing the affordability
16 of housing that's mandated in each of these
17 communities and advised for each of these
18 communities. We'll take that back. You can
19 be assured that they're working on this
20 probably day and night at this moment. On the
21 Brown to Green, we would recommend that you

22 consider that if you have sites that you'd
23 like to work on, bring them in before the
24 Brownfields redevelopment interagency team
25 where you have a round table approach where □

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2 DEP and EDA and all -- you may be familiar
3 with it-- can sit and help. But it is one in
4 the governor's economic growth strategy, one
5 of the things he points to is redevelopment of
6 Brownfields. So, certainly we're upstate --
7 are trying to help more in that area.

8 And the last person who signed up is
9 Stewart Koperweis. I really made a mess of
10 that, didn't I?

11 MR. KOPERWEIS: No, actually, I've
12 heard worse.

13 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: I'll take that as
14 a compliment, thank you.

15 MR. KOPERWEIS: But, good evening.
16 It's Stewart Koperweis, K-O-P-E-R-W-E-I-S.
17 Hi. Just want to obviously welcome you here
18 to Jersey City and Hudson County on behalf of
19 the Division of Planning and also the
20 department director of parks and engineering
21 in Hudson County and the Board of Freeholders
22 and obviously, the Honorable Tom DeGise is our
23 county executive. Most of my -- actually, all
24 of my comments are in writing and I presented
25 them to you so I'll try to make them as □

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2 quickly as possible but also to get across

3 some of the salient points.

4 One of the most critical -- I guess,
5 first of all, let me just say that I'm
6 thrilled to hear a lot of issues regarding
7 economic development and revitalization. That
8 is one of my key issues and one of the things
9 that I wanted to discuss today and try to
10 certainly bring together how it is relevant to
11 the state plan of Cross-Acceptance and also
12 planning as itself.

13 One of the definitions that I've
14 come across over time in terms of planning is
15 that it's called the method of proceeding
16 based upon analysis, the application of
17 foresight, the guide, direct, all constrain
18 subsequent actions in order to achieve goals.
19 And I find that very relevant and more --
20 putting it in more common speak in a way --
21 it's more of a way to determine how things
22 should be years hence and that's what I really
23 want to talk about.

24 Planning requires cooperation. It's
25 a partnership with a right of government and □

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2 non-governmental entities. The Cross-
3 Acceptance report that has been mentioned and
4 we've been dealing with over these past
5 several years has many foresights and guides
6 to direct, as we were talking about and which
7 are incorporated into the master plan. And,
8 briefly, they are five key issues which are
9 overall quality of life in Hudson County,

10 economic revitalization, the commercial and
11 industrial base, preserve character of
12 existing well-established neighborhoods,
13 improve the transportation network and
14 increase the tax base.

15 So, consequently, what we're looking
16 for is that we're trying to deduce and surmise
17 and ultimately persuasively argue that
18 attracting new businesses and commercial
19 tenants is essential to fulfilling the goals
20 and objectives in Hudson County's plan and in
21 order to achieve those five stated goals in
22 the master plan, what we're trying to talk
23 about is economic development incentives being
24 an integral part of our master plan in the
25 Cross-Acceptance. □

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2 If I can call upon some of my
3 experience as involved in the past as the
4 director of economic development in Jersey
5 City and the development corporation, I can
6 tell you from first-hand experience that CEOs
7 when they come to -- move to New Jersey, the
8 first question they ponder in their decision
9 is where's the money. And that's obviously a
10 very natural question for them to ask. But
11 more importantly, the next question that they
12 ask and probably the ultimately question they
13 ask is will my employees be happy. And what
14 does this mean basically to an incentive
15 program. Well, it's very simple. It's
16 because CEOs know that their employees have a

17 vast unquantifiable dollar amount that's
18 associate with each individual on the job
19 experience and that the loss of each employee
20 creates an added expense swaying that decision
21 making process from the CEO to move or not to
22 move to New Jersey. And that's what helps
23 determine the CEO and his company ultimately
24 to move to the state of New Jersey in terms of
25 his employees being happy is quite frankly, □

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2 what is classified as the driving force of the
3 New Jersey economy. And that simply is the
4 entrepreneur who creates the ancillary
5 businesses and servicing the needs of those
6 particular employees.

7 Now, let me just give you some
8 stats -- facts here. According to the U.S.
9 Census data for New Jersey, roughly 184 small
10 businesses, those with fewer than nineteen
11 employees make up three-quarters of the
12 state's businesses translating into 1.8
13 million jobs or about fifty-one percent of the
14 non-private sector work force. Therefore, it
15 is the small business which is the economic
16 engine of New Jersey and the developed
17 ancillary services for their employees to be
18 happy.

19 And how does this relate to
20 planning? Well, let's talk about a few of
21 these numbers. From 1990 to 2000, Hudson
22 County represented forty-five percent of the
23 state's growth in the fire industries, which

24 is fire insurance real estate sector.

25 However, in total numbers, Hudson County □

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2 actually only represents six percent of the
3 state's entire employment force. Let me
4 repeat that. Six percent of the state's
5 employment is in Hudson County, yet forty-five
6 percent of the state's growth in that sector
7 was in Hudson County. They're extraordinary
8 percentages and consequently for that matter,
9 the entire state and the government must put
10 forth business and transportation initiatives
11 that will help us create cost competitive
12 positions relative to our surrounding
13 communities if we are to continue our growth.

14 And what I would like to do is look
15 at some of those important successful
16 initiatives and one of those is the most
17 important that we have in this state right
18 now, which is the Urban Enterprise Zone and
19 the Zone Assistant Fund that is associated
20 with that. And it helps create the stop the
21 decline of the state's urban centers creating
22 incentives for investment and, ultimately,
23 develop job opportunities that have been
24 nothing short of miraculous over the last
25 twenty years. There are more than eight □

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2 thousand UEZ businesses in the zone program
3 comprised of thirty-seven different zones in
4 thirty-two municipalities in the state. As of

5 the latest figures from 2004, there has been
6 just under 506 million dollars reinvested from
7 the zone fund from 1500 different projects
8 throughout the state. This has translated
9 into twenty-one billion dollars invested by
10 the private sector, employing more than
11 150,000 people and creating roughly fifty-six
12 thousand full-time jobs.

13 So, basically, what we're also
14 looking at is that the benefits, if I can say
15 this, that the reason why most businesses have
16 moved New Jersey is that seventy-four percent
17 of all the jobs created were by participating
18 businesses in the Urban Enterprise Zone.
19 Furthermore, the sales tax exemption program
20 that benefits from the program is utilized by
21 eighty percent of UEZ businesses. And lastly,
22 one out of every four businesses that
23 relocated to New Jersey has chosen a location
24 in an urban enterprise zone.

25 These are significant numbers that □

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2 demonstrate an impact upon the state plan as a
3 totality. In Jersey City, where you are
4 today, in Hudson County, the seat of the
5 Hudson County, eighty-one million dollars have
6 been invested in zone assistant funds creating
7 more than twenty-three thousand new jobs.
8 Creating nine billion dollars in private
9 sector investment.

10 As Hudson County has the most UEZs
11 in the state with seven, Bayonne, Guttenberg,

12 Jersey City, Kearny, North Bergen, Union City
13 and West New York, we are not only concerned
14 here with the overall impact of the program in
15 terms of the numbers just described but we're
16 dismayed as to the impact of the short-sighted
17 changes already being made and being proposed
18 to the program we'll have on the planning and
19 the development of our future.

20 Unfortunately, each day the state --
21 we have the New Jersey commerce, Economic
22 Growth and Tourism Commission by the direction
23 of the Office of Economic Growth, have set new
24 rules for UEZ designated businesses, rules and
25 regulations such as rebates on tax exemptions □

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2 for purchases, contract amendments and
3 certifications and recertifications procedures
4 that are arbitrarily promulgated and of
5 course, the number of certified businesses in
6 the program to decrease and will continue to
7 decrease. And, in fact, I may add to that,
8 that what has just occurred since August of
9 2006, 102 businesses in Jersey City alone have
10 moved out of that program.

11 What I'm asking and what we're
12 trying to say and as the New Jersey Small
13 Business Development Center has stated, among
14 the list of their twenty-six recommendations
15 that they put forth in September of 2006 is
16 that a reduction in the rules, regulations and
17 the overall tax burden on all small companies
18 needs to take place in New Jersey to make it

19 more entrepreneurial friendly. The UEZ
20 changes are a prime example, and I'm trying to
21 impart to you, of what not to do. They are
22 actually seizing the engine of the economic
23 growth vitality of this county and state.
24 Every day the coordinators of the
25 municipalities and the UEZ and the UEZ's □

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2 commissions walk a fine line and they are a
3 trusted advocate for investments from the
4 private sector.

5 And above all, I think you all know
6 exactly what we're talking about. I've
7 enjoyed working with you in the past and
8 sitting down in these meetings and really
9 having a great conversation on all of these
10 technical yet very difficult, philosophical
11 decisions. And they work side by side with
12 planners, architects, engineers instituting
13 creative and innovative projects to fulfill
14 the missions and goals and objectives of the
15 state plan.

16 In conclusion, what I'm asking of
17 you is that the state planning commission, as
18 part of their Cross-Acceptance process, to
19 take a stance and basically to say stop the
20 slow dismemberment of the UEZ program, support
21 the efforts which have shown without a doubt
22 two partnerships and sustain the programs of
23 growth with a state plan endorsement of the
24 Urban Enterprise Zone and continue that.
25 Thank you very much for your time and □

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2 consideration. I appreciate it and I welcome
3 you here again and I really appreciate you
4 being here as part of a true partnership with
5 the county. Thank you.

6 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Thank you, Mr.
7 Koperweis and thank you for giving us your
8 comments in writing. That will help us 'cause
9 we can share them with other state agencies as
10 well.

11 MR. KOPERWEIS: And if I may just
12 conclude and lastly, there is a map here as
13 well that talks about the locations of the
14 UEZs and also the UEZs within Hudson County
15 itself. Thank you very much.

16 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Thank you.

17 MR. MARKS: Madam Chair?

18 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Sir?

19 MR. MARKS: If I may, I would just
20 like to echo Mr. Koperweis' comments. This
21 was not something that was even on the horizon
22 when we went through the Cross-Acceptance
23 process over the last couple of years. It's
24 something that has arisen over the last less
25 than a year. I think given the state's budget □

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2 difficulties and I think it was a -- it
3 translates into a play, either a power play or
4 a financial play by the Treasury or the State
5 Department of Commerce to try to take away or
6 usurp Urban Enterprise Zone funds and I think

7 Hudson County has been very successful in
8 leveraging those funds to create jobs and to
9 facilitate economic and community development
10 projects within the county and it's an
11 important part of the state's goals with
12 regard to the state plan or to revitalize
13 urban areas and to facilitate economic
14 development. And the Urban Enterprise Zone
15 program is an important component in
16 addressing those two issues.

17 So I think the state -- I echo Mr.
18 Koperweis and I believe through the state
19 planning commission and the Office of Smart
20 Growth, if you could possibly take back that
21 message that it is extremely important to
22 continue the Urban Enterprise Zone program in
23 its totality.

24 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Certainly. We'll
25 take back the message and thank you. □

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2 MR. KOPERWEIS: Thank you very much.
3 Thank you.

4 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Manuel Amaral?

5 MR. AMARAL: Yes. My name is Manuel
6 Amaral, A-M-A-R-A-L. I'm a taxpayer in
7 Harrison, New Jersey. And it's funny how
8 people talk about small business and bringing
9 small business to the county or to the state.
10 Once I've been in business in Harrison, in
11 this county, and I'm being put out of business
12 by the town and the county. They're trying to
13 take my property by eminent domain so they can

14 build a parking lot, build luxury condos and
15 luxury stores. My business has been there for
16 twenty-five years; it's no good anymore. All
17 your plans sound very nice but I don't think
18 you think or care -- maybe you care but a lot
19 of people that do this planning don't care and
20 don't think about the small people that they
21 crush, that they destroy, the livelihoods that
22 they destroyed throughout the state with
23 eminent domain. When they take property from
24 private individuals to pass on to private
25 developers that step on you, crush you -- the □

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2 first time they talk to you, it's a letter
3 from the town telling you how much they're
4 going to give you, we have fourteen days to
5 respond or they'll take you out.
6 And when one -- even people that
7 work for this county go to my tenants and tell
8 them that they got to leave by the first of
9 February because I don't own the property
10 anymore, which is a lie. It's a shame that --
11 I'm sorry that I'm here -- maybe you have
12 nothing to do with this, but nobody listens to
13 you. I have to go to the county executive
14 here after trying to call his office twice or
15 three times and speak with him. My mayor
16 won't talk to me, the governor won't talk to
17 me, the members won't talk to me. Oh, they'll
18 send me nice letters but nobody does anything.
19 And my livelihood -- my sons came out of
20 college. They decided to join the business

21 with me. My employees that have been with me
22 for twenty, twenty-five years and they're even
23 one who's in town. They have 275 acres that
24 they have to develop, making a stadium to give
25 there for the flies to be there because the □

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2 people are not going to go to the games.

3 They're not going now; they're not going to go

4 then. And they're just kicking us out. They

5 don't have half an acre for me. There's no

6 place in town that I can be. It's a shame and

7 it's a disgrace and somebody in the state

8 needs to do something about it. That's all I

9 have to say.

10 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: I do thank you,

11 Mr. Amaral, and I will tell you that it's

12 certainly not something that we're doing in

13 this process in Cross-Acceptance. This is not

14 a matter that we're involved here with. I can

15 tell you that. But it's difficult for me to

16 respond given that it's not under our purview

17 to really do anything to assist you in your

18 particular case.

19 MR. AMARAL: I have a question for

20 Mr. Marks. You're talking about the parking,

21 community parking that the county, the town,

22 the state -- I don't know who wants to build

23 it. Who is it that is going to build it, do

24 you know?

25 MR. MARKS: I'm not familiar with □

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2 the exact details of where the parking garage
3 is going to be or who is going to be the
4 actual contractor in charge of it.

5 MR. AMARAL: Seems like nobody
6 knows.

7 MR. MARKS: It should be that those
8 details should be available from the
9 municipality.

10 MR. AMARAL: Well, they say it's the
11 county. The county says it's the town. The
12 developer says that he's building it for both
13 of them.

14 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: Well, Mr. Amaral,
15 I --

16 MR. AMARAL: I know. I'm sorry.
17 I'm sorry.

18 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: In fact, I will
19 tell you --

20 MR. AMARAL: I'm sorry.

21 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: No, I understand
22 your situation but --

23 MR. AMARAL: It's a lot of pain in
24 my heart.

25 CHAIRWOMAN SWAN: I do understand □

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2 that. I'm sorry that we're not the correct
3 body to really listen to you or to give you
4 any advice. I don't have anybody else that
5 has signed up but I certainly would like to
6 ask if anybody else would like to come forward
7 and speak. Okay. With that then, I'll ask
8 if -- I'll close to the public and ask if

9 there are any comments from the members up
10 here or from state agency partners. Okay.
11 Then in closing, I thank everybody once again
12 for coming out. It has been great working
13 with Stephen and his team and we will continue
14 to do so that we can reach the end of this
15 process and end up with a new state plan which
16 I hope will be good for all the citizens of
17 New Jersey, both in the preservation end and
18 the development end so that we get the balance
19 right. Thank you very much.

20 (Meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, Mark Weinberg, Electronic Court
Reporter and Notary Public, do hereby certify
that:

I was present during the entirety of the
foregoing proceedings, and that I caused to be
recorded a true, complete and verbatim
recording of the proceedings via digital
means, in the matter of the:
OFFICE OF SMART GROWTH CROSS-ACCEPTANCE III
PUBLIC HEARING.

15

16 I further certify that I am not employed
17 by nor related to any party to this action.

18

19 In witness whereof, I hereby sign this

20 date:

21 February 26, 2007.

22

23

24

Mark Weinberg

25

□

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2

C E R T I F I C A T I O N

3

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9

10 I further certify that I am not employed
11 by nor related to any party to this action.

12

13 In witness whereof, I hereby sign this

14 date:

15 February 26, 2007.

16

17

18

Lisa Bar-Leib

19

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25 □