



## *State of New Jersey*

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS  
STATE PLANNING COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SMART GROWTH

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JON S. CORZINE  
Governor

SUSAN BASS LEVIN  
Commissioner

BEN SPINELLI  
Executive Director & Secretary

**Mercer County Cross-acceptance III Public Hearing  
New Jersey State Planning Commission  
Minutes of the Meeting Held July 11, 2007  
McDade Administration Building  
Freeholder Conference Room  
640 South Broad Street  
Room 211  
Trenton, NJ 08611**

### **WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS**

Ben Spinelli, Executive Director, called the July 11, 2007 meeting of the New Jersey State Planning Commission to order at 6:12 p.m. Mr. Spinelli proceeded to introduce the State Planning Commission (SPC) members in attendance. Louise Wilson (public member), Marilyn Lennon (public member) and Jen Godoski (State Agency representative) attended on behalf of the SPC. Mr. Spinelli introduced Donna Lewis, Planning Director for the Mercer County Planning Division. Mr. Spinelli then introduced staff attending on behalf of the Office of Smart Growth (OSG) and OSG's State Agency partners. The following people were in attendance on behalf of OSG: Benjamin Spinelli, Russel Like, Area Planner, and Corey Piasecki, Area Planner. The following people were in attendance on behalf of OSG's State Agency partners: Roberta Lang, New Jersey Department of Agriculture and Liz Semple, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

### **OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT**

Mr. Spinelli announced that notice of the date, time and place of the meeting had been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mr. Spinelli asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **OVERVIEW OF MERCER COUNTY CROSS-ACCEPTANCE & THE STATE PLAN**

Benjamin Spinelli, Chief Counsel and Executive Director for OSG, provided an overview of the third round of the Cross-acceptance process. Mr. Spinelli then reviewed and summarized the goals of the State Plan, and identified State Plan policy issues with particular relevance to Mercer County.

### **MERCER COUNTY CROSS-ACCEPTANCE REPORT PRESENTATION**

Ms. Donna Lewis of Mercer County provided some brief comments on behalf of the county. Ms. Lewis indicated that the County is working on a new County Master Plan; the County is continuing to work on the new Master Plan but will provide future opportunities for public comment. The County is concerned as to whether the various state agencies will align their policies with the State Plan in a manner that makes the State Plan more meaningful; Ms. Lewis mentioned that the County's experience in this regard, to date, has not been positive, but she is hopeful that this will change in the future. Ms. Lewis suggested that the state agencies should reexamine their relationship with the State Plan, as well as pertinent policies and procedures.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Commenter 1:** Ms. Carol Hager of Hopewell Township indicated that although she is an academic writing about public participation, she also wanted to comment with regard to the State Plan. Ms. Hager said that she lives in the Township's Titusville section and she was not happy that Titusville is still Planning Area 2. She attributed its remaining Planning Area 2 to the influence of an outdated sewer service area map, though the area is no longer in sewer service. Ms. Hager mentioned that the area south of Route 546 is not consistent with Planning Area 2.

**Commenter 2:** Mr. Michael Bolan of Banisch Associates spoke on behalf of Hopewell Township. Mr. Bolan said that the wastewater Hopewell's management plan changes have not been recognized on the State Plan map. Mr. Bolan said that because municipalities were never given a chance to review the July 2006 mapping changes introduced by the SPC, the integrity of the process has been compromised. Mr. Bolan also said that the delineation criteria for the various planning areas do not work. Mr. Bolan said that he is opposed to the use of "defer to plan endorsement" as a response to a requested mapping change for cross-acceptance because of the indefinite time frame associated with plan endorsement.

**Commenter 3:** Mr. Lee Solow, Director of Planning for the Princeton Regional Planning Board, made comments with regard to the northern section of Princeton Township (also known as the Princeton Ridge). Princeton had requested that certain areas of the Princeton Ridge be changed to Planning Area 2, and Mr. Solow said that not all of the northern section of Princeton Township is environmentally sensitive. Mr. Solow said that the areas for which changes to PA2 are requested are either developed, surrounded by development, or served by infrastructure. Mr. Solow illustrated this point by showing a map of the Princeton Ridge area and highlighting areas that are heavily developed, including strip malls, housing, hospital facilities, nursing homes, townhouses, affordable housing developments, and offices. Mr. Solow urged OSG and the SPC to change these areas of the Princeton Ridge to PA2, and added that most of the areas for which changes are requested are close to Princeton's designated center.

**Commenter 4:** Mr. Russ Swanson, chair of the Hopewell Township planning board, requested guidance about what would become of areas that are currently Planning Area 3 in Titusville. Also, with regard to center-based development, Mr. Swanson said that Mercer County has become a graveyard, and he alluded to Hamilton and West Windsor Townships. Accordingly, Mr. Swanson said that the State Plan should address political problems connected with the creation of new centers, and that it should emphasize infill development rather than the wholesale creation of new centers.

**ADJOURN**

Mr. Spinelli adjourned the hearing at 7:17 p.m.