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**Monmouth County Cross-Acceptance III Public Hearing
New Jersey State Planning Commission
Minutes of the Meeting Held August 21, 2007
Monmouth County Library Headquarters
125 Symmes Drive
Manalapan, NJ 07726**

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Ben Spinelli, Executive Director and Secretary, called the August 21, 2007 meeting of the New Jersey State Planning Commission (SPC) to order at 6:39 p.m. Mr. Spinelli welcomed everyone to the 18th of 21 Cross-acceptance hearings in the counties. He introduced the following representatives of the SPC: SPC Chair Edward McKenna, Principal of McKenna, Du Pont, Higgins & Stone, and Susan Weber, New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT). Mr. Spinelli also introduced staff attending on behalf of the Office of Smart Growth (OSG): Jung Kim, Lorissa Whitaker and Leigh Jones. Mr. Spinelli thanked Bonnie Goldschlag and Joe Barris of Monmouth County for hosting the meeting.

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.

OVERVIEW OF MONMOUTH COUNTY CROSS-ACCEPTANCE & THE STATE PLAN

Mr. Spinelli provided an overview of the third round of the Cross-acceptance process by which we update the State Plan. The presentation noted the various internal, interagency and staff-to-staff meetings that have taken place to date, and the role of Monmouth County as the negotiating entity on behalf of municipalities and the local public. Mr. Spinelli noted that no final decisions were being made tonight, in order for everyone from each of New Jersey's 21 counties to have their say.

Mr. Spinelli explained the role of the State Plan Policy Map (SPPM) as a graphic depiction of the State Plan's goals and policies. The Preliminary Map contains proposed changes and has had significant input from Monmouth County. A full draft map representing all proposed changes will be released in October 2007.

Mr. Spinelli discussed the Statement of Agreements and Disagreements (SAD) as the tool by which policy and mapping issues are negotiated, with OSG staff responses going to the SPC. Some issues have been deferred to Plan Endorsement, due to the nature of the proposed changes being more specific to a particular municipality.



Mr. Spinelli provided an overview of the state's population characteristics and its high density. However, New Jersey contains significant variations in the distribution of that population. He noted the need for policies and programs to meet the challenges of a diverse state. Monmouth County in particular is one of the fastest growing counties in the state, which has presented problems such as long commute times and high property tax burdens that need sustainable long-term solutions.

Mr. Spinelli emphasized that the State Plan policies are broadly applicable to different parts of New Jersey and provides guidance to state agencies as to how to be smarter about its expenditures and investments. He noted that while local governments control zoning, the state can choose whether or not to subsidize local policy, thereby encouraging alignment of local and state interests as well as that of the private sector. State Plan goals include stopping sprawl, revitalizing towns and cities, concentrating development in centers, and improving physical and social infrastructures.

Mr. Spinelli noted the new format of the State Plan, following the elements of a local master plan per the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL). The content will be similar but updated. He noted that Cross-acceptance was a labor-intensive process and that there will be proposals to change the update cycle to 10 years from the current 3 years.

Mr. Spinelli discussed some of the major issues specific to Monmouth County, including COAH, centers, transportation, and infrastructure. He noted open space as a high priority in Monmouth County, including the County's aggressive farmland preservation program. He stated that the Raritan Bayshore is being considered as a Special Resource Area.

Next steps for Cross-acceptance include completing all 21 county hearings, finalizing a draft of the State Plan, and SPC review and adoption. Mr. Spinelli stated that the public will have continued opportunities to provide comments to OSG or the SPC.

MONMOUTH COUNTY CROSS-ACCEPTANCE REPORT PRESENTATION

Bonnie Goldschlag, Assistant Planning Director, began her presentation by explaining the importance of Cross-Acceptance, namely in that it is used by state agencies to create regulations and that it ensures municipal and county concerns are addressed in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. Ms. Goldschlag then explain Monmouth County's role in the process. The County served as the negotiating entity, meeting with each municipality, providing technical assistance, negotiating issues, and preparing the county Cross-Acceptance report. She acknowledged various members of her staff for their efforts. She stated that the municipal role in the process was to attend meetings, review projections, and recommend map changes.

Ms. Goldschlag enumerated countywide issues that emerged during the process, including those related to the overall process, planning areas, outreach, and Plan Endorsement. She noted the need for the County to create an addendum to the original report, and recommended that all changes proposed by the state be presented in the beginning of the process. She also called for more realistic and fair deadlines for counties and municipalities to respond to state proposals. She agreed with Mr. Spinelli on increasing the amount of time between each State Plan update.

Ms. Goldschlag discussed various mapping issues. She was concerned about DEP changing Critical Environmental Sites (CES) to Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas (PA5). She

thought that CES could overlay Rural Planning Areas (PA4). She also suggested that a closer look should be given to policies for Metropolitan Planning Area (PA1) and see they can accommodate both large and small communities.

Ms. Goldschlag suggested that there should be more regular meetings between state agencies and counties. She also felt that the State Plan needs to be more publicized, and saw this as a key to its implementation.

Ms. Goldschlag discussed Monmouth County's Plan Endorsement efforts, describe its efforts on various regional plans and how this should aid municipalities that will go through the Plan Endorsement process in the future. With regard to transit, the County supports the Monmouth Junction alternative for the proposed Middlesex-Ocean-Monmouth rail service. Ms. Goldschlag noted that this route serves more smart growth areas than the other alternatives. She also stated that there should be alignment of Cross-acceptance and COAH projections. She concluded her presentation by advocating for more funds to implement smart growth projects.

Before moving on to public comment, Mr. Spinelli acknowledged Joe Donald and Rick Brown from DEP for their attendance and participation.

PUBLIC COMMENT

At 7:34 p.m., Mr. Spinelli opened the hearing for public comment, asking those who requested to speak to try to limit their comments to five minutes.

Commenter 1: Michael Lane, a resident of Keyport, stated that the Borough is small and that a plan is important for this town facing waterfront development pressure, as well as pressure from the local governing body to generate ratables. As Keyport is relatively developed, the only redevelopment opportunities available are infill projects along creeks and the waterfront. He spoke specifically about the redevelopment of Brown's Point Marina, for which a map change is proposed. He feels that it is inappropriate for the proposed 92 unit condominium project because it is 90% wetlands and is subject to flooding. The map change would decrease the site's land area designated as environmentally-sensitive from about 95% to 50%. Given that filled wetlands along major creeks have a history of instability, he asks the government agencies to reflect on this when considering a mapping change. He also feels that the Aero Marine site, located at the mouth of a creek, should be developed, just not entirely.

Mr. Spinelli noted that Keyport has approached OSG regarding Plan Endorsement, during which the raised issues can be addressed.

Commenter 2: Robert Ludwig, a resident of Keyport and a member of their Brownfields Steering Committee, stated that he seconds the comments of Commenter 1. He said that the environment must be given priority over the specific concerns of individuals. Mr. Ludwig said that he feels the public participation process in Keyport leaves much to be desired and that there are too many private meetings held between government officials and developers.

Commenter 3: Mark Muraczewski provided comments on behalf of Howell Township, who were not able to submit their comments on time. He said that there are five locations along the Rt. 9 corridor that are proposed to change from PA5 to PA2. He said that the township recently paid for sewer installation in this area to promote redevelopment and thus it may not warrant a PA5 designation.

Mr. Muraczewski added that there is a proposal to change from PA2 to PA4 an area in the northeast corner of Howell Township that borders Wall Township. He said that the area includes a site designated as an affordable housing site in Howell's Fair Share Plan and that because it is located within a sewer service area, they would like to extend the PA2 boundary to include this site.

Mr. Muraczewski discussed a third area around the intersection of Routes 33 and 34, where there is HD3 mixed-use zoning in a sewer service area, which he believed should change from PA4 to PA2 or PA3. He noted that the long-term solution to this area would be designating a center via Plan Endorsement.

Commenter 4: Gary Schecker of Boulder Development stated that he is concerned about land in Howell Township that is proposed as PA4b because it has a sewer line and is adjacent to a PA1. His company is a contract purchaser for this site. He stated that it had a preliminary environmental analysis and that perhaps $\frac{1}{4}$ acres of the 7 acre site is environmentally sensitive, though the site has not had a full LOI. Mr. Schecker requested that it be changed to a PA2.

Commenter 5: Michele Pezzullo began by asking why if New Jersey is the densest state in the U.S. would we want it to be denser. She asked what happens if the plans don't work. She asked whether the State was trying to micromanage the growth of municipalities. She questioned whether Sandy Hook, as a federal park, was reflected as such on the preliminary State Plan Policy Map. She asked if there is criteria for selecting developers, such as how familiar they are with the area in which they want to develop. She said that building and overbuilding is not in the state's best interest and that New Jersey is becoming unlivable for her between the taxes and the growth that results in her not having privacy in her backyard.

Commenter 6: Chris Francy, a resident of Highlands Borough and a former Cross-Acceptance Committee Member, stated that there is a disconnect between the Cross-Acceptance worksheet responses and the master plans produced. He gave the example of the master plan calling for a return to the community's residential roots, but the worksheet calling for increased urbanization. He said that while the Cross-Acceptance responses indicate that there is sufficient sewer capacity for development plans, the sewer authority says otherwise. Mr. Francy said that there is a site in Highlands—adjacent to Atlantic Highlands—that is environmentally problematic for development, but the maps do not reflect this. He added that certain historic sites are similarly excluded from their proper designation on the map. Mr. Francy stated that while it is a goal of the master plan to preserve the ridgeline, this is not reflected in the work done at the State level.

Commenter 7: Paul Gleitz of Heyer, Gruel and Associates, representing the Borough of Tinton Falls, requested changes to four specific areas on the State Plan Policy Map. First, there is an area south of Route 33 and west of the Garden State Parkway that is a proposed affordable housing site. The Borough asks that it change from a PA5 to a PA2 and that the portions of the site that fall within the 300-foot buffer for a C-1 stream be given CES designation. Second, Mr. Gleitz enumerated another PA5 to PA2 change involving an area on the east side of Shafto Road and south of Route 33 near Asbury Avenue, as the Borough has plans to bring industrial and office uses to the area. Third, Mr. Gleitz said that there is a mapping error that shows an area of residential subdivisions south of Shafto Road as a county park. He requested that the area be designated PA2. Last, Mr. Gleitz said that there are numerous areas proposed as PA5 that are currently residential subdivisions. Given this, he asks that they be changed to a PA2.

Commenter 8: Art Bernard of Wall Township and his attorney, Gordon Gemma, requested that Mr. Bernard's 538 acre property, which may be environmentally sensitive, be changed from PA5 to PA2. Mr. Bernard said that the property is located in both Tinton Falls and Wall and that

growth is planned for the area around the site. He said that its main environmental constraint is a river. He said that since 2001, the planning area designation of portions of the site has changed and that the site already has many infrastructure investments. Mr. Bernard stated that Wall Township said that the Office of Smart Growth went too far with the PA5 designation.

Commenter 9: Arthur Schwartz of Raleigh, NC said that he appeared to discuss his property, the Schwartz Property, which is near that of the previous two commenters and is proposed to be changed from a PA2 to PA4B. Mr. Schwartz stated that the property has modest value and that its sandy soils are inappropriate for farming. He listed six reasons why he feels it is most appropriate for a PA2, including proximity to the following: airports and major cities, state highways, shopping, mass transit, community facilities, and recreational opportunities.

Commenter 10: Paul Rinear of Aberdeen said that development pressure is everywhere and, in response to the previous commenter, everything in New Jersey is close to various amenities. He said he was appearing to discuss an area proposed to be changed from PA5 to PA2. He said that it is currently an upland wooded area on the Matawan Creek with native plants and no sewer service. Mr. Rinear said that the site was designated an area of in need of redevelopment to be used for affordable housing and that he opposed this project for which the municipality waived development regulations. He said that he has another site in mind for the project that is near downtown. He added that he would like to see planning used as a means of fighting global warming.

Commenter 11: Thomas Coan of the Monmouth Athletic Center in Howell said he was in attendance to speak about the Center's site, which is in a proposed PA5. He said that an LOI was performed and found that wetlands exist on only 2.5 acres of the 45-acre site. He requested that all of Fairfield Road from Route 33 to the railroad be designated PA2; otherwise it becomes a utility hardship. Mr. Coan stated that it is part of the railroad right-of-way being considered for the Middlesex-Ocean-Monmouth proposal.

Commenter 12: Steve Prine, a member of the Manalapan Planning Board, stated that he does not know of any interaction between counties and that he wants more contact with neighboring towns so that they can plan regionally.

Commenter 13: Lou Andruzzi, a member of the Union Beach Planning Board, thanked everyone for their hard work. He said that plans for density need to be coordinated with environmental concerns to avoid flooding. Mr. Andruzzi said that Union Beach is not a PA1 in the same way as large cities and that there ought to be another designation, such as a PA1B. He said that he believes in preserving Monmouth County's character. He stated that the Aero Marine site is extremely close to Union Beach and that a change from PA5 to PA1 is not the same as a change from PA1 to PA5. He stressed the need for efficiency and said that it costs little to preserve.

Commenter 14: Conor Jennings, a Highlands resident, expressed concern about how the municipality has allowed for zoning amendments in the Shadow Run property in favor of a developer. Mr. Jennings stated that the zoning now permits for two towers, 180 feet in height, in an area with a slumping slope which may give way. He noted the high public costs of this project. He stated that there was a CES adjacent in the Atlantic Highlands but not in the Highlands. He criticized the connections between developers and elected officials.

Commenter 15: Don Smith, Vice Chairman of the Howell Environmental Commission, said that he made comments on planning areas in 2004, but that he didn't have enough information to prepare for tonight's meeting. He said that he was only told about it by ANJEC. Mr. Smith stated

that it bothers him when developers go before political entities to ask for a change in land use policy. He said that the Howell Environmental Commission likes PA4 and PA5 designations and that they understand that a PA5 designation does not eliminate development. He stated that Fairfield Road is rural and that they should stick with the plan map as it is currently depicted. He requested a copy of the plan when it is complete.

Commenter 16: Jerry Meyer of Neptune Township's Environmental Commission said that the Cross-Acceptance process was a surprise to him and that none of his fellow commission members knew of it. He suggested that a proposal be put in place to notify commissions. Lorissa Whitaker responded that all county and local governing bodies and boards had been notified.

Mr. Meyer asked about the link between the State Plan and state assistance and funding. Mr. Spinelli replied that the State Plan serves as a guide and that incentives are used to encourage its implementation.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was abruptly brought to a close as maintenance staff of the County Library shut off the lights in the room in response to the meeting having exceeded its allotted time. The meeting concluded at approximately 8:45 p.m.