



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
STATE PLANNING COMMISSION
OFFICE OF SMART GROWTH

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Acting Executive Director

**Salem County Cross-acceptance III Public Hearing
New Jersey State Planning Commission
Minutes of the Meeting Held April 17, 2007
Salem County Vocational and Technical School
880 Route 45
Woodstown, New Jersey 08098-2804**

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Ben Spinelli, Acting Executive Director for the Office of Smart Growth, called the April 17, 2007 meeting of the Salem County Cross Acceptance Process to order at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Spinelli introduced the State Planning Commission Members in attendance Monique Purcell, Director, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources, New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) and Susan Weber, Supervising Transportation Analyst, New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT). Mr. Spinelli then introduced the Salem County Planning Consultant, Caroline Armstrong of Melvin Kernan Development Strategies. 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: Erika Webb, Area Planner for Salem County, Lorissa Whitaker, Area Planner and Kate Meade, Area Planner. The following people were in attendance on behalf of OSG's State Agency partners: Bill Purdie and Rick Brown, NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

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 SALEM COUNTY CROSS-ACCEPTANCE & THE STATE PLAN

Benjamin Spinelli, Acting Executive Director for OSG provided an overview of the third round of the Cross-acceptance process. This dialogue included a breakdown of the issues that were discussed at the internal, interagency and staff-to-staff meetings, as it relates to Salem County. Mr. Spinelli also

discussed the revisions to the State Development & Redevelopment Plan (State Plan). Mr. Spinelli stressed the importance of the policies and goals of the State Plan. The recent Plan Endorsement revisions were also discussed.

SALEM COUNTY CROSS-ACCEPTANCE REPORT PRESENTATION

Caroline Armstrong, Melvin Kernan Development Strategies, Salem County Planning Consultant for Cross Acceptance

Ms. Armstrong presented a power point presentation outlining the Cross Acceptance process and issues relevant to Salem County. The County had several public meetings in 2004 and prepared a Salem County Cross Acceptance plan in 2005. Ms. Armstrong was retained in December 2006 and discussed the outreach involved to the municipalities to determine sewer lines, redevelopment areas, existing infrastructure and approved developments.

She presented the 2001 State Plan Map for Salem County, the 2004 Preliminary Plan Map and the Preliminary Plan Map revisions from July 2006. She stated that per the County's plan they want to channel future development into the western region in an effort to preserve open space, agricultural lands, and the rural character of the County. Ms. Armstrong referenced the Southern New Jersey Waterfront Master Plan prepared by the Delaware River Port Authority of Pennsylvania and New Jersey that targets specific growth along the waterfront in Salem County.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Commenter 1: Lee Ware, Salem County Administrator and Freeholder Director stated his support for the Salem County 2001 Strategic Plan that focuses growth on the 295 corridor, which promotes developing 11% of the land in the County and preserving 89%. To date the County has preserved 20,000 acres of farmland. Mr. Ware stated the land is the owner's retirement and the 2001 Plan should remain as written.

Commenter 2: Senator Stephen M. Sweeney spoke on behalf of the 3rd District Legislature for himself, John Burzichelli and Douglas Fisher who support the Salem County 2001 Strategic Plan, and expressed their concern for the future of the farmers.

Commenter 3: Beth Timberman, Salem County Freeholder and chair in charge of planning & transportation stated the County is very rural with 11% designated for growth and 24,000 acres in farmland preservation. The County will also look towards obtaining Plan Endorsement.

Commenter 4: Julie Acton, Salem County Freeholder supports the Salem County 2001 Strategic Plan that balances open space and development.

Commenter 5: John Crawford, Mayor of Pennsville Township stated he does not want to endorse the Cross Acceptance process and stated Salem County has smart growth, but can't afford no growth. Mr. Crawford stated the County needs a plan to compensate landowners and towns that object to planning area changes inconsistent with their master plans.

Commenter 6: Dave Lindenmuth, Salem County Freeholder believes in farmland and open space preservation, but not at the expense of others and 89% of the land has been set aside for preservation with 11% for growth.

Commenter 7: Jeffrey J. Hogan, Salem County Freeholder also supports preservation, but commercial growth is also necessary.

Commenter 8: Bruce Bobbitt, Salem County Freeholder agrees with his constituents and supports balanced development with farmland preservation as stated in the Salem County 2001 Strategic Plan.

Commenter 9: Dan McCoy, Penns Grove Borough submitted comments in writing. Mr. McCoy stated his children don't want to remain here because there is no development and his contract to sell his land expired because of the threat of a Planning Area 5 (PA5) designation. Mr. McCoy stated this must remain a local issue and there should be no governmental interference. Mr. McCoy submitted a petition on behalf of Salem County landowners and farmers.

Commenter 10: Harold Young, Pennsville Township submitted comments in writing and a map showing two properties he purchased in the 1970s that have been changed to PA5. These properties have water and sewer and he wanted to know who benefits by taking it out of the industrial zone and making it a PA5.

Commenter 11: Chris Davenport, Salem Main Street Program expressed his support for OSG in the work they have done for the program and stated New Jersey is a home rule state.

Commenter 12: Ed Voyles, Carneys Point stated he would like to see the final map.

Commenter 13: Nick Frawceshier, Carneys Point stated New Jersey is a home rule state and PA5 designation affects negotiations with developers. He expressed his support for the Salem County 2001 Strategic Plan, which designated 11% of the corridor for growth. He stated the changes remove 50% of the smart growth corridor. He asked how we support growth in the Route 44/48 corridor.

Commenter 14: William Schulze stated 11% of the land in Salem County is developable and 5% is being taken away, which only leaves 6%. He asked what other counties have to do with the rest of New Jersey.

Commenter 15: Wayne Pelura, Carneys Point submitted comments in writing and stated the land is used as collateral for borrowing and when the Planning Area changes it affects collateral.

Commenter 16: Arnold DiTeodoro, Carneys Point Township Committeeman submitted comments in writing and supports the Salem County 2001 Strategic Plan. He discussed the redevelopment area and the proposed Heritage Builders development of 400 homes on a parcel that was changed to PA5. Mr. DiTeodoro expressed concern about Township ratables.

Commenter 17: Anthony Wright, Carneys Point Township Committeeman stated there is not enough population and income to support commercial development and the labor force does not support commercial development. Mr. Wright stated economic decline has affected the school systems and the school taxes go up every year. Mr. Wright asked for the PA5 designation to be removed.

Commenter 18: William Valichka, Jr., Pedricktown contractor submitted comments in writing and stated that Salem County is the second highest in farmland preservation in the state and pays the most taxes. Mr. Valichka stated the PA5 designation will hurt business owners and they will go out of business. He asked for support from local officials and stated the changes affect future retirement.

Commenter 19: Donna Scarfo, Carneys Point resident discussed the redevelopment areas and the quality of life in the Township. Ms. Scarfo stated Carneys Point has no WaWa or Home Depot and needs more ratables.

Commenter 20: Ann Marie Bauman, Carneys Point Township landowner submitted comments in writing and stated her neighbors will lose everything and only 10% of the county is designated for growth. She calculated at \$30,000 per acre that would be \$257 million after the PA5 designation goes into effect. Ms. Bauman supports the Salem County 2001 Strategic Plan and stated 200 acres will not be affected by the PA5 change. She reiterated the value of the land will be reduced by the PA5 designation.

Commenter 21: Nancy Merritt, Salem County Watershed Task Force thanked OSG for their support with the Task Force and stated there are environmentally sensitive areas in the Salem County Smart Growth corridor. Ms. Merritt said growth is not just occurring in the Smart Growth corridor, but sprawl is occurring. She stated the map is meaningless without regulation and should be enforced once it is finalized. Ms. Merritt suggested strategic ordinances to guide growth and not to ignore precious natural resources.

Commenter 22: Bud Harris, Carneys Point farmer stated he is educating everyone on OSG and DEP and will be coming to Trenton. He supports the Salem County 2001 Strategic Plan.

Commenter 23: Anthony Musumeci, Pedricktown owns 400-acres of land in the new PA5 and has lost his money on the farm. He wants to have the right to sell his farm when times get tough. Mr. Musumeci referred to the United States Constitution.

Commenter 24: Anthony Matarese, Pennsville doesn't understand how the land has been PA1 for 27 years and now there is an immediate change. The land cannot be left to liens. If it is environmentally sensitive the State should compensate the landowners, because the County had a growth plan.

Commenter 25: Clarence Johnston, Carneys Point farmer submitted comments in writing and stated his farm is located between Route 295 and the Turnpike and the PA1/PA2 designation makes it suitable for growth. He thanked OSG for returning the parcel to PA2 and suggested maintaining other designations.

Commenter 26: John Ober, Pilesgrove Township Planning Board submitted comments in writing and referred to the 2005 Salem County Cross Acceptance report with Pilesgrove Township's requests including a planned industrial node along Route 40 and the Woodstown center extended into Pilesgrove.

Commenter 27: Jane Nogaki, New Jersey Environmental Federation (NJEF) in Burlington County stated that sprawl is prominent although farmland preservation is occurring. She stated her support for OSG. Salem County is one of the twenty-one counties that can get it right and the PA4 and PA5 designations reflect County capacity. The County should consider water capacity and saltwater intrusion.

Commenter 28: Suzanne McCarthy, South Jersey Land & Water Trust (SJL&WT) discussed Green Acres activity in Carneys Point and Oldmans Townships. She supports OSG PA5 changes, but is concerned with negotiations. These issues should have been addressed years ago as the lands are environmentally sensitive, including Beaver Creek, which should be a Critical Environmental Site (CES). Supawna Meadows should be protected and planning needs to take place including Natural

Resource Inventories (NRIs) and local protections. Protections need to occur at the County level and eco-tourism should be explored.

Commenter 29: Bob Widdifield, Pittsgrove Township stated Salem County needs funding for infrastructure and water in the Smart Growth areas.

Commenter 30: Dominick J. Sassi, Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) and Carneys Point resident submitted comments in writing and wants to protect open space, farmland preservation and water resources, and supports the PA5 changes. Mr. Sassi discussed the need for planning and how growth will contribute to rates, taxes, congestion, and school systems.

Commenter 31: Jay M. Perry, Oldmans Township Planning Board submitted comments in writing and has been involved in the process from the beginning and owns 400-acres along Oldmans Creek and Beaver Creek. He supports the Salem County 2001 Strategic Plan and stated the loss of PA2 to PA5 is 50% of the area in the plan.

Commenter 32: Matt Blake, American Littoral Society (ALS) supports the PA5 changes and stated the County should not lose the land to poorly planned development. New Jersey loses fifteen thousand acres a year to sprawl. Mr. Blake submitted comments in writing and referred to a regional TDR program, focusing growth in appropriate places, and making sure there is enough water and sewer. Mr. Blake stated this is not a land grab and the public should not be asked to subsidize private development proposals occurring on farms and natural resources.

Commenter 33: Cheryl Reardon, of Concerned Pilesgrove Residents (CPR) submitted comments in writing and stated there should be a blueprint to protect the farmland and water supply and her organization disagrees with the Freeholders. She commended OSG and DEP and stated the concern for the northwest area of the County that is a ground water recharge area. Salt water intrusion becomes more expensive every year in this area. She stated the Freeholders should protect all citizens.

Commenter 34: Joe Scarpa asked if OSG or DEP had any studies or information on private septic versus sewer systems.

Commenter 35: Elizabeth Ciuzio, Biologist with New Jersey Audubon Society (NJAS) submitted maps that overlaid the State Planning area layers with areas that need to be protected and commended the State, but other areas need protection in the future. Ms. Ciuzio's stated her maps show areas that need to be protected including important migrating bird areas, Supawna Meadows and Burden Hill should be designated a PA5.

Commenter 36: Francis Rapa, New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF) submitted a map showing ground water recharge areas. He supports OSG & DEP designations of PA5 since these areas include flood plains, wetlands, and important soils and support the most important wildlife. He referred to mapping Item #100221 and #120404 that should be maintained as PA5. He then referred to mapping Item #100203, which includes the Gateway Business Park, but has environmentally sensitive areas and should be reviewed by DEP.

Commenter 37: Newton Perry, Oldmans Township landowner stated DEP has too many controls and there are too many state mandates. Compensation should be provided.

Commenter 38: Paul Schlimme, Penns Grove Township stated he bought his property in 1988 with plans to develop it, but then he applied for farmland presentation, but there was no funding. Mr.

Schlimme stated wetlands regulations keep changing and he doesn't support his property being changed to PA5.

Commenter 39: Dr. David Klinke, Pilesgrove Township is a former Dupont worker who has seen the decline in the industry from 25,000 employees to 900 today. The County needs jobs and has lost ratables. Mr. Klinke supports both sides, but said there needs to be a compromise.

Commenter 40: Jack Cimprich, Mayor of Upper Pittsgrove wants to protect environmentally sensitive features and agriculture, but is concerned with compensation and fairness. He called for implementation of a good plan, because there is not enough funding for farmland preservation and he supports the Green Acres funding, which has almost run out. He stated Salem County should have supported farmland preservation on the ballot last November and we need to have the State funding put on the ballot.

Commenter 41: Herb Wegner, Pittsgrove Environmental Commission stated we need money for farmland preservation and doesn't like retirement used as an excuse for lack of farmland. Mr. Wegner is concerned about the aquifers. He stated PA5 does restrict, but for example Pittsgrove is 97% agricultural and environmentally sensitive areas. He also stated the largest ratables have the highest tax rates and not to sell land to developers.

Commenter 42: Ben Casella, New Jersey Farm Bureau (NJFB) submitted comments in writing and supports the coexistence of economic development and agriculture. He supports the Salem County 2001 Strategic Plan and stated it should be kept in place. Mr. Casella asked if it was possible to get water quality management approvals from DEP with new restrictions.

Commenter 43: James Shields, Oldmans Township never knew concerns existed with Beaver Creek and Oldmans Creek. He owns 11-acres he is trying to sell. Mr. Shields mentioned a plant built behind Beaver Creek. He supports the Salem County 2001 Strategic Plan and expressed the need to address both environmentally sensitive areas and economic development.

Commenter 44: Steve DeBois, Pittsgrove Township is a 7th generation farmer and will continue to farm. He is an active environmentalist and is taking care of his land, but expressed the need to maintain the value of the farms.

Commenter 45: Edward Lewis, Penns Grove Township submitted comments in writing and is concerned about the future of the County for our children and grandchildren. He stated the County needs ratables, jobs, public water and sewer and covered his suggestions of what the County was lacking from "A" to "Z".

Mr. Lewis was the last public comment. Mr. Spinelli then asked those in attendance if anyone else would like to comment before the meeting was adjourned.

Commenter 46: Angelo Rosamondo, Oldmans Township was concerned about notification on the PA5 changes and stated the Township and State should have sent notice.

Additional comments were submitted in writing by Ronald Nipe, resident of Oldmans Township.

ADJOURN

Mr. Spinelli adjourned the hearing at 9:30PM.