

HUNTERDON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Minutes – May 4, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: Carol Hoffmann, Phil Greiner, Andy Borkin, Gabrielle Bolarakis, Page Stiger, Richard Dodds, Commissioner Deputy Director Jeff Kuhl, Tom Mathews

ABSENT: Marc Saluk, Natalie Zaman, Dana Desiderio, Commissioner Director Rich, Commissioner Van Doren

STAFF PRESENT: Bill Millette, Bob Hornby, Frank Bell, Katherine Fullerton, Sue Pena, Rebecca Deakin, Aaron Culton- County Counsel

Planning Board Chair Carol Hoffmann read the Open Public Meetings Act notice and called the meeting to order at 8:16 A.M.

"This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate notice has been provided by prominently posting and maintaining so posted throughout the year in the Office of the County Clerk, Hall of Records, Main Street, Flemington, New Jersey, a public place reserved for such announcements, and by mailing on or before January 19th, 2023 to The Hunterdon Democrat, The Express Times, Courier News, The Trenton Times, Star Ledger, and TAPinto, newspapers designated by the Hunterdon County Planning Board to receive such notices. Notice has also been posted online in the Hunterdon County News."

MINUTES OF THE APRIL 6, 2023 MEETING

Motion to approve minutes with corrections, Richard Dodds, Phil Greiner seconded. All in Favor.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER UPDATE

Commissioner Kuhl reported that there was a meeting with Mr. Dodds of Kingwood and Congressman Kean, to visit the Rock Mitigation area on Route 29. We have been giving out Community Development Block grants to areas in Flemington, Glen Gardner, and Bloomsbury. We are moving forward in the process of selling the Clinton Transfer Station. We have purchased more open space in East Amwell. We introduced the budget with no tax increase and Hunterdon County is the healthiest county in New Jersey. Phil Greiner replied that it was an impressive achievement to keep the tax rate flat.

STAFF UPDATES

Farmland: Bob Hornby

There are 24 active preservation applications in 10 municipalities: We have 6 in the County Planning Incentive Grant Program, 4 in the Municipal Planning Incentive Grant Program, and 14 in the State Direct Easement Program. Soil Protection Standards for Preserved Farms continues to be debated by the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) and interested parties. Special Occasion Events on Preserved Farms guidance documents have been prepared by the SADC, information is being distributed to a variety of stakeholders and a webinar has been recorded. Preserved farms that can show a minimum of \$10,000 in agricultural production can host up to 26 non-agricultural events annually. There is a registration process with the easement holder, enforcement is through the SADC. The Commissioners recommended acceptance of the Farmland Preservation Plan on May 2, which is good for another 10 years. Special thanks to all involved in this successful process. On May 23rd the Chamber of Commerce is hosting a talk on rural grants for small business and farms.

Open Space: Bill Millette

Deer Path Parks upgrades continue on multiple fronts: Bathroom upgrades both interior and exterior, new permeable paver parking lot, the playground should be breaking ground soon, with the pavilion shortly thereafter. The horseshoe pit upgrades will follow as well. The resurfacing of the Columbia and Landsdown trail has been completed. Thanks to the Engineering department we were able to reconfigure a bit of the trail off Railroad Ave in Califon where it crosses Academy St. so trail users don't have to walk down the street anymore. There are no longer any on-road sections of the Columbia Trail in Hunterdon County. Trout season opened at the beginning of April and the County hosted the stocking of thousands of fish throughout the park system. D&R Greenway was awarded an open space acquisition grant for the purchase of 12 wooded acres

in East Amwell. This will add additional acreage to their Mountain Ridge Preserve. We closed our 2023 Historic Preservation Grant round at the end of March. We received 8 applications requesting more than \$556,000.00 of funding. This exceeds the \$224,00.00 we have available. Our next POSAC meeting will be on May 22nd.

GIS: Rebecca Deakin

Rebecca reported that the new Elections Districts web mapping application, Hunterdon County Voter Information, was finalized. It was introduced to the County Commissioners, there was a press release, and posters are being provided to all the municipalities. Commissioner Kuhl replied that it is very impressive. The Hunterdon Harvest web mapping application has two more participants on the map since the last GIS update; there are a total of 19 farm/business locations on the map. More data cleanup is still needed for the Signs & Poles solution before we'll be able to import the data and design the application. We were slated to be transferred to the new system for NextGen 911 in March 2024, but that might get pushed up. We have been working with the State regarding our address point additions/corrections and provided them with what we have at the end of April. They will be able to move forward with this dataset and we'll continue to make updates as we have the time. The data layers are still in the process of being updated and transferred to the new server. Once the Highlands grant is awarded/approved for the parcel outsourcing, we'll need to work on the RFP. We posted for a GIS Specialist 2 position and have had a couple of interviews.

Planning Issues: Katherine Fullerton

Katherine reported that the subcommittee for the Growth Management Plan met on April 9th and May 3rd to review the current recommendations. We are hoping that the build out analysis will be completed by June. We have submitted the scope of work to the Highlands Council for approval of funding for the Historic Preservation Plan. The GIS Data Layer Update also was submitted to the Highlands Council and was approved for funding at its April 20th meeting. In the next week or so we hope to have an award letter for both that we can submit to the Commissioners for approval. We have a great start for the Breakfast Talk series with the Office of Emergency Management on preparedness and resiliency. Brayden Fahey will be kicking off the series with an overview on May 16th. This will be a virtual meeting from 9:00-10:30 and a link will be sent out to attend. We are still working on a date for the Storm Water Emergency Management session. The DEP is excited to participate in this session. We anticipate resuming sessions in the fall for Cyber Security and Electrical Grid Security. We submitted the 2nd quarter report to NJTPA for the FY2023 STP Grant. We had also submitted a request to NJTPA for the FY2023 Supplemental support technology grant for a new copier and was awarded it. Our old NJTPA copier went to Cultural and Heritage as it had some more life to it for them to use. We attended the NJTPA RTAC meeting on April 10th, the Economic Development meeting on April 17th, and we will attend the NJTPA Board meeting next Monday in Newark. Application reviews have been slow. We have had a lot of returns. In April we had four returns and one major subdivision which was granted conditional approval relating to road frontage design. We have been busy with conditional reviews. Carol asked that the board relay to their municipalities that the "Preparedness" Breakfast Talk is coming up on May 16th, it's a ZOOM, and please register. It's not just for OEM's.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee:

Carol reported that the Executive Committee met, and they discussed finalizing the Emergency Management Plan and future breakfast talks about storm water.

DRC Committee Report:

Carol said that she and Page would attend today's meeting. The next meeting is on May 18th with one Affordable housing unit to discuss. Phil and Richard volunteered for the next meeting.

Transportation: Tom Mathews

Tom reported:

- County Route 620 – Readington Road, the County is replacing two culverts. The road will be closed starting on May 15th for a few months with detours.
- Culvert U11 on Fin Road in Union Township has an emergency closure. The County is replacing the culvert with a projected opening in June.

Tom said that the Rockfall Mitigation Group had a meeting for Kingwood and on May 18th a similar meeting for West Amwell and Lambertville will be held. As we once again celebrated Arbor Day, our Shade Tree

Commission planted a tree by the cedar pavilion at Deer Path Park. We are starting to see a nice grove form to provide shade in the years to come. The Commission provided 23 trees for schools that wanted to celebrate Arbor Day and plant a tree on their grounds. Andy asked if Route 12 was a county or state road, Tom replied that it is state. Gabrielle asked if the closures in Readington would affect the Balloon Festival, and Tom replied no, the job will be done before the festival. Andy asked if Tom could notify the state about the huge pothole on Rt. 12. Tom replied that it is likely a water main break that needs to be addressed before the pothole can be fixed.

Old Business/New Business:

Katherine informed Board members that the Growth Management recommendations are in your packet for review. Carol said that there was a change in the Principal Planner for this project and the subcommittee feels that no ground was lost when this change occurred. Richard thanked Commissioner Kuhl and Commissioner Soloway for coming out to the Rockfall Mitigation area. He also thanked Congressman Kean for observing the big money project that doesn't have to be. Carol commented that the detours are substantial in that area. Commissioner Kuhl replied that they are not made for that kind of volume. Carol asked about blackfly spraying, Commissioner Kuhl was not aware of anything now.

Public Comment:

No public comment at this time.

There was no further business to be brought before the Board. Richard made a motion to adjourn the Planning Board meeting, Andy seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:50AM.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Thursday June 1, 2023, at 8:15 AM
Susan Pena for Secretary, Phil Greiner