

HUNTERDON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Minutes – October 7, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: Carol Hoffmann, Phil Greiner, Gabrielle Bolarakis, Richard Dodds, Dana Desiderio-call in, Tom Mathews- call in

ABSENT: Commissioner Holt, Commissioner Van Doren, Marc Saluk, Andy Borkin, Page Stiger

STAFF PRESENT: Bob Hornby, Carrie Fellows, Frank Bell, Katherine Fullerton, William Millette, Patricia Leidner, Susan Pena, Rebecca Deakin, Aaron Culton - County Counsel

Chair, Carol Hoffmann read the Open Public Meetings Act notice and called the meeting to order at 8:15

"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 7, 2021 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."

This meeting was held via ZOOM platform.

MINUTES OF THE July 7th, 2020 MEETING:

Motion to approve minutes, Richard Dodds, Phil Greiner seconded, Gabrielle Bolorakis abstained, motion carried.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER UPDATE:

County Commissioners were not available to provide an update.

STAFF UPDATES:

Farmland Update: Bob Hornby

There are 19 applications being processed. The DeSapio and Kollmer properties in Kingwood closed in September using Federal matching funds. A preservation offer has been made on the Beam farm in Bethlehem. New preservation applications are being accepted. Staff is monitoring the PSE&G tower replacement process and crop reimbursement policy. We have released the RFP for a new Farmland Preservation Plan and are expecting bids by the end of October; the last plan was adopted in 2008. The State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) is still meeting online. The major issues are solar development on prime soils, special occasion events on farms, and soils disturbance standards for preserved farms. In Right to Farm, the Beneduce (Alexandria) hearings finished up in September and may be finalized in October. The Board granted protections for live background music and various site plan aspects. The Serrani Farm (Clinton Twp.) was granted Commercial Farm Certification in September and will hold a hearing at a future date for equine management practices.

Open Space: Bill Millette

Staff has been working on setting up and tracking the removal of hazard trees in County parks. We currently have 30 pending or completed tree jobs so far for 2021, pertaining mainly to ash trees affected by the Emerald Ash Borer in locations frequented by the public: parking lots, structures, and neighboring buildings. We are not addressing remote areas or trails at this time. Staff continues work with nonprofit partners to close properties to be preserved and transferred to the County for the park system. The next POSAC meeting is on November 22. There are still funds available for 2021 open space projects. Municipalities that have potential open space preservation projects should be encouraged to apply.

GIS: Patty Leidner

GIS is in the process of updating Ida storm damage response. As part of this process, GIS is creating a waterway application for use by local OEM, police, and county staff, provided to NJDEP so they may focus on areas with storm damage. Staff have updated their ArcGIS desktop to new software. Staff also continues to work on

the farm project app – staff hopes to go live next week. The vacancy in GIS has been filled; Derek Swanson will start on October 18.

Projects: Frank Bell

Court Street: Preparation of the renovation plan to this site will be submitted soon for approval as this site is in the Historic District.

HC Jail and Justice Center: We are in discussion with the Prosecutors and the Sheriff's Department for the possible use of the jail property for various needs. The Justice Center punch list is almost complete for the Phase II exterior upgrades. The Phase I project of replacing the cooling tower and the air handler is scheduled for a mid-fall start. These units are from 1990's and are not energy efficient. In Phase II, we will be going into the interior of the building to replace the Variable Air Volume Units which also will be brought up to energy efficiency. We are awaiting materials at this point.

Historic Courthouse: The prequalification documents have been returned and will be reviewed. DLGS has been contacted to determine if the County can bid the project in a single package rather than two. The New Jersey Historical Trust has preliminarily approved a concept and is expected to provide the conformation of Phase II work.

Burn Building and Training Center: A groundbreaking ceremony is coming up on October 18 for the fire training building in which actual fires will occur. We will have two different systems in the building, Class A and Class B. Class A is a live burn, such as burning pallets. Class B is a propane type system, such a propane stove that catches fire.

LINK Bus: For planning purposes we are looking to relocate the North Route parking location; we are evaluating various sites.

Planning: Katherine Fullerton

The breakfast talk via ZOOM went well. It was a good initiation of using Zoom and there was good participation. Staff continues to track the cannabis ordinances. Of the twenty-five ordinances received to date, twenty-two have prohibited and three are permitting any cannabis business. One municipality has not written an ordinance. Staff is currently working to include Resiliency Planning as part of the Growth Management Plan. The MLUL has been updated to require a Resiliency Plan for all municipalities. Staff is still working on the RFP for the Growth Management Plan. Staff has been busy with NJTPA; the 2023 Grant packet went out yesterday. The first quarter of FY22 is due October 15. There is one application to review for today's DRC meeting.

Department Head: Carrie Fellows

NJTPA – Staff are now focused on submitting the first quarter NJTPA FY22 grant reports and entering data in the new cost tracking system. The FY23 grant was submitted. The County is in recovery mode after Tropical Storm Ida. Patty and staff have been working on the constant updating of the maps. There was a lot of damage in the parks, particularly trail washouts and bridge damage.

Cultural & Heritage: Staff have been providing resources to help people with historic properties damaged by Tropical Storm Ida, as well as for regular maintenance. Resources were posted on the County's storm response page. Staff have been assisting Roxey Ballet to find a new temporary location; their current location in Lambertville was flooded and condemned.

American Rescue Plan Fund: The County has a budget committee to assess applications. As the funding is Federal, the applications need to meet requirements for spending. Funding may not be used for repairing storm damage. The Department is seeking funding for numerous Parks infrastructure projects as well as for smaller regant programs.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee:

Carol reported that the Executive Committee met via ZOOM and discussed the possibility of having live meetings. It was determined that it would be nice to be back in person, but if the 6-foot social distance is still in required for in

person meetings, ZOOM will be used instead. The recycling presentation will be posted on the County website.

DRC Committee Report:

The Planning Board members who agreed to attend today's meeting are Carol and Dana. Gabrielle and Phil volunteered to attend the October 15 meeting.

Katherine reported that we will have a few applications for the October 21 meeting, we have 3 already. The last few months we have reviewed 11 applications, 9 were granted Conditional Approval Not to Construct.

Today's DRC meeting

- East Amwell – Affordable housing units

Stormwater: Katherine reported that Twenty-four municipalities have supplied ordinances. Readington Township Ordinance 33-2021 was adopted on 10/4/21. It has been reviewed by staff and meets the statute and regulations. Planning Board members discussed the ordinance and decided to approve it.

Stormwater Ordinances for Approval: – Katherine Fullerton

- Readington Township, Ordinance #33-2021

Full Approval: Moved: Richard Dodds; Seconded: Phil Greiner. All in Favor

Transportation: Tom Mathews

Tom reported: We have some road resurfacing projects that have begun or will begin this month:

- County Route 635 from Mine Road to Vansickles
- County Route 517 going from Oldwick, north to the Morris County line

There were 11 roads closed due to Tropical Storm Ida. Some will not open until 2022, but most will. Most bridges had debris damage. East Amwell, Lambertville, and Delaware Township took the brunt of Tropical Storm Ida. The Northern part of the County cleaned up within a few days. It was noted that some culverts still need to be cleaned up.

Old Business/New Business:

Richard reported that the PennEast Pipeline project is over, they have decided to not go through Hunterdon County.

Richard asked Bob if this will open properties for preservation that have been waiting for a decision. Bob responded that the SADC is waiting for the Attorney General for comment. PennEast owns some properties in fee and could potentially sell them. There are several previous applications in Delaware and Holland Townships that are affected.

Public Comment:

Barbara Sachau introduced herself. Her comment is on Resiliency – this is not good. The storms we are getting are impacting properties. Regulations seem to be in the 1900's; we are in 2021. Trees are being removed from people's properties. People need to be notified to protect the ones living downhill. Trees hold water in their roots, waiting for resiliency after someone gets wiped out isn't very good.

Carol reminded everyone that the next meeting is on November 4.

There was no further business to be brought before the Board. Phil Greiner made a motion to adjourn the Planning Board meeting, Richard Dodds seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 9:25AM.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Thursday November 7, 2021 at 8:15 AM

Susan Pena for Secretary, Phil Greiner