

HUNTERDON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Minutes – May 6, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: Carol Hoffmann, Phil Greiner, Andy Borkin, Gabrielle Bolarakis, Page Stiger, Richard Dodds, Dana Desiderio, Tom Mathews, Commissioner VanDoren

ABSENT: Commissioner Holt

STAFF PRESENT: Bill Millette, Bob Hornby, Carrie Fellows, Frank Bell, Katherine Fullerton, Patricia Liedner, Marc Saluk, Leah Hunt and 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 December 15th, 2020 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 telephonically. Dial in number: 720-399-1558 or 877-658-5107 Passcode: 444103

MINUTES OF THE APRIL 4, 2020 MEETING:

Motion to approve minutes, Richard Dodds, Andy Borkin seconded, motion carried.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER UPDATE:

Commissioner Van Doren reported that the county budget was introduced on April 20th. The public hearing will take place on May 18th. The tax rate is still frozen at 31.5 cents. Our budget is at \$92.9M which is down from \$94M. The American Rescue funds from the US Treasury will be released soon for 2021/2022. Commissioners Van Doren and Holt will be reviewing the rules once they are established on May 12th. The COVID vaccine clinics are now a "no wait, direct appointment" format. The County is back to using the Johnson & Johnson vaccine and also the Moderna vaccine for our clinics. Richard Dodds asked about the rules for the municipalities [for American Rescue Plan funds]. Commissioner Van Doren replied that the County will be funded through the Federal Government and the Municipalities through the State. Phil Greiner remarked that he is impressed that the budget has stayed the same or has been less. Thank you in behalf of all the taxpayers.

STAFF UPDATES:

Economic Development: Marc Saluk

Now that it is Spring, our focus has been on the 579 Trail, which has been a huge success. Last year we framed and promoted the site to our residents, this year it is being framed for the tourism side. We are partnering with a PR firm and promoting the Philadelphia /New York area this year. Megan Muelhbauer and Bob Hornby are on our committee and we are getting input from all areas in the county. We are considering hosting an Expo for the 579 Trail members, hopefully before this year is over. The Tourism initiative, a public/private entity, is slow moving, but now is official and has dedicated funding through the Highlands Council. We hope to build it in the next 18 months as a direct marketing machine. The 78/22 Coalition has decided to explore a home-based business office initiative. The panel would review ordinances and governance for these businesses in this corridor, or if people wanted to move into our area to do so. Carol Hoffmann asked if the internet providers have been in contact, Mark replied that he was not sure.

Farmland Update: Bob Hornby

Thanks to Economic Development for their work on the 579 Trail. The Silva property in Holland closed Wednesday, 128 acres. Bob is still working with farmers along the PSE&G easement where they are replacing the towers with monopoles, especially regarding the crop reimbursement policy. He thanked the CADB and the Hunterdon Land Trust for their assistance. The final approval for Magnolia Creek Farm in Franklin is on the CADB agenda. Formalizing monitoring procedure will be discussed. Also, a house replacement in Clinton. From the SADC, discussion of using solar on farmland, special events on farms, and soil protection standards are out for comment. In Right to Farm, the Beneduce hearing will continue in June.

Open Space: Bill Millette

We are working on a closing for our Stanton Manor project, 40 acres on Stanton Station Rd. There are three pending grant recipient projects with imminent closings: the Curtis Farm Easement in Delaware Township, the Maritan Property in Kingwood, and the GenOn property in Holland. The Milford Waterfront project is slowly moving along. We continue with due diligence investigation on both the environmental front and from an access standpoint. All parties involved are working with DOT on issues related to access to the site over and around the railroad. The Open Space Trust Fund continues to support Parks on hazardous ash tree removal. We are working on a case by case basis as trees are identified until we can get a full inventory of ash trees to prioritize removal. The next POSAC meeting is May 24th. I've been hearing word that a few open space grant applications will be submitted for consideration.

GIS: Patty Leidner

We are working on going through data software review and cleanup, moving away from the Approach database. We are working on the Cicada Tracing Survey App. for the Health Department that went live yesterday. We created three apps for Human Services: Mental Health, Prescription Drug and Addiction Services. We are continuing to create an app for East Amwell's farm project; eventually we hope this will go Countywide. We have received feedback from Marc Saluk, Megan Muehlbauer and Bob Hornby, along with feedback from East Amwell. We have received 3 more CAD files for tax map updating; currently we are working on Kingwood Township. We are still mapping the fireboxes in the county, and the COVID mapping is kept up to date daily by municipality.

Projects: Frank Bell

Frank reported that the County received a \$1.5M New Jersey Historic Trust grant with an equal County match, for a 2-phase project on the Historic Courthouse. Construction documents and the contractor prequalification package are under review. For the Burn Building in Clinton Township, we are constructing a burn building and related structures to help our firefighters to train, this is a 3.6-million-dollar project. The library on Rt 12, will undergo some facelifts on the inside, creating some conference rooms and a "makers space" to help people to test their ideas, print things. We will have a 3D printer to use. We are doing a study on how we can better reuse the jail that we have, we have not had any inmates in quite some time. We are looking at areas to process and store vehicles, working with the Sheriff's and the Prosecutor's offices.

Planning: Katherine Fullerton, Leah Hunt

Introduction of new Planner Trainee, Leah Hunt. Leah graduated from Rutgers Bloustein School in 2020 with a Planning and Public Policy and minored in Critical and Comparative Race and Ethnic Studies.

Katherine reported that 15 municipalities had their Stormwater reports approved by the board already. There are 4 today for approval; 4 have had their first reading and the 2nd reading will be later this month. Three had issues that needed to be returned to the municipality for further re-writing. The Wastewater Management update: the NJ Planning Council meeting has been meeting at least monthly to review revisions to comments submitted to the DEP on new Wastewater regulations. The DEP notified us that the calculations for Hunterdon's Wastewater Management Plan were submitted by staff previously, all we need now is the narrative for the plan. Leah reported that the State came out with their Draft Climate Change Resiliency Strategy on April 22nd that recognizes that temperature, precipitation water levels are increasing in NJ more than other places in the world. Staff have reviewed the document and action items.

Department Head: Carrie Fellows

Carrie reported that the Highlands Conformance petition hearing is May 20 at 4pm. She filed the 3Q FY2021 report for the NJTPA grant which provides staff salary support; the NJTPA FY2022 preliminary grant package is now under review. Carrie also reported that the Board of County Commissioners requested in a resolution approved in late April, that the NJDOT pause its plans for rockfall mitigation projects along Route 29 and I-78 in Hunterdon County, in order to seek more public input on the high cost for the extensive mitigation and concerns raised by concerned parties. A media release and a story are available on local media and in the county's newsletter. Commissioner Rich and she will be attending the NJTPA Board Meeting on May 10th. Staff have been working since last April on a new County Hazard Mitigation Plan. The updated plan identifies areas of potential risk and creates a strategy to reduce disaster losses and break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. Mitigation planning also allows Hunterdon County, and participating jurisdictions, to remain eligible to receive grant funding for projects that will reduce the impact of future disaster events. Page asked about when the hearing minutes for the Highlands would be completed from February. Carrie responded that the hearing minutes

were delayed as our original transcriber was unable to complete the work; we had to find and have a new vendor approved by the County. We received the transcription yesterday, staff have not had a chance to review.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee:

Carol reported that the committee has not met this past month. Carol did ask if we are in a position yet to resume breakfast talks, particularly the Recycling talk? Carrie replied that we might have to go back to the board on this as the Health Department's Division Head of Solid Waste/Recycling, Rebecca Lunger, has been working on the COVID Clinics.

DRC Committee Report:

Carol said that Phil and Gabrielle volunteered for DRC today. For the May 20th meeting, we will send an email requesting volunteers. Katherine noted that the DRC dashboard and report file have been updated. There were 11 applications, 5 returns, 2 previous applications that needed administrative work. DRC took action on 4 applications on April 1st:

- Bloomsbury Restaurant – Patio constructed in a ROW
- Cell Phone Tower – ROW & CAD disc
- Minor Subdivision – ROW and CAD disc.
- Lot Line adjustment
- A mixed-use project that was denied as it was unclear about the residential units that are projected over the site.

Stormwater Ordinances for Approval: – Katherine Fullerton

- Frenchtown Borough, Ordinance #863
- Glen Gardner Borough, Ordinance #2021-05
- Hampton Borough, Ordinance #3-2021
- Raritan Township, Ordinance #21-03
- All received Full Approval: Moved: Page Stiger Seconded: Richard Dodds. All in Favor.

Transportation: Tom Mathews

Tom reported:

- CR 616 - Under construction for repair, it's the Quakertown to Cherryville Roadway.
- Rt 16 Bridge - Unicom Area is a 3 phase 3-year project that is in its 2nd year of ongoing bridge & road work
- C32 Bridge - Clinton Township is a truss bridge that is being replaced with a concrete bridge. Expected closure to start in June.
- CR 513 Roadway – Resurfacing project from 31 to Main Street in High Bridge
- E200 – Runyon Mill Road, East Amwell Township is a stone arch bridge rebuild.
- R24 – Readington Township, Truss Bridge is in for a complete rehab and possible weight limit increase.
- Delaware Township - The Historic Covered Bridge decking replacement went out to bid

Old Business/New Business:

Richard reported that the PennEast Pipeline project is now before the Supreme Court for decision. Richard thanked Bill and County Counsel for their help in the Martin Property closing.

Public Comments:

Barbara Sachau, Raritan Twp – my concern about the recycling talk. Recycling plastic is extremely important to have a talk on and to act on. We have plastic rain falling all over the world and destroying our oceans. Decimating our oceans, getting into our birds and fish. It is a very big problem, and it is a very big problem that can kill the world just as much as climate change.

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

NEXT MEETING DATE: Thursday June 3, 2021 at 8:15 AM

Susan Pena for Secretary, Phil Greiner