

HUNTERDON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Minutes – May 5, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT: Carol Hoffmann, Phil Greiner, Andy Borkin, Gabrielle Bolarakis, Page Stiger, Richard Dodds

ABSENT: Dana Desiderio, Tom Mathews, Commissioner Rich, Marc Saluk, Commissioner Soloway, Commissioner VanDoren,

STAFF PRESENT: Bill Millette, Bob Hornby, Carrie Fellows, Katherine Fullerton, Patty Liedner, Rebecca Deakin- call in, Derek Swanson, Kris Melchers- call in, Frank Bell, County Counsel

"This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate notice has been provided by prominently posting copies of this notice on the first and second floor of the Main Street County Complex, 71 Main Street, Building #1, Flemington, New Jersey, and filed in the Office of the County Clerk on or about January 7, 2022. This notice was faxed/mailed to the following newspapers on or about January 7, 2022: The Hunterdon Democrat, The Star Ledger, Trenton Times, Courier News and Express Times, newspapers designated to receive such notices. It was also posted online at the Hunterdon County News and on the Hunterdon County website."

MINUTES OF THE APRIL 7, 2022, MEETING

Motion to approve minutes with corrections as discussed, Richard Dodds, Andy Borkin seconded, motion carried.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER UPDATE

No Commissioners were present to give a report. Page asked whether or not Juneteenth would be an observed holiday by the County since it is now a state and federal holiday. Carrie reported that she has not heard anything more on if it would be designated. Carol thanked Commissioner Matt Holt for his many dedicated years at the County as he retired May 1st.

STAFF UPDATES

Farmland: Bob Hornby

There are 17 active farmland preservation applications in 9 municipalities; 5 in the County Planning Incentive Grant Program, 5 in the Municipal Planning Incentive Grant Program, and 7 in the State Direct Easement Program, including 4 new applications and 2 that are close to closing. The Hunterdon County Agriculture Development Board (CADB) will be meeting on May 12. Agenda items include a discussion of the draft Soil Protection Standards on preserved farms released by the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) for comment by June 10. CADB Staff continues to monitor state guidance on siting for grid scale solar installations on prime soils. A bill for Special Occasion Events on preserved farms stalled after passing both houses in two very different versions without reconciliation. The Ag community is watching the spread of avian flu and the potential for damage on chicken flocks. The CADB hosted an excellent public meeting on April 14 to gather public input on the Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan. First adopted in 2008, this plan is required to be updated every 10 years to qualify for continuing SADC preservation funding. The next information meeting will be lunchtime on June 8 via Zoom.

Open Space: Bill Millette

Hunterdon Land Trust is working on closing two projects in Raritan Township for the preservation of about 115 acres. New Jersey Conservation Foundation is working on the closing of about 75 acres in Frenchtown. These are all County Open Space Acquisition Assistance grants where the County is contributing 50% of the purchase price. We are reviewing the submitted Historic Preservation Grant applications. We had fewer applications this year than last, but there is more money requested than we have available. Progress is being made with NJDOT to complete a property transfer of a few lots adjacent to the Arboretum. The County and DOT agreed back in 1997 to swap parkland for the Route 31 expansion, and once some wetland mitigation work was done, DOT would transfer that property to the Parks system. Due to staff turnover and retirements, it's been difficult to finish the swap, but there has been action recently. These parcels are directly adjacent to the Arboretum and open greater possibilities of trail connections from

the Arboretum. We have several appraisals in the works for prospective properties for preservation. We hope to wrap those up this month and propose some offers. Several municipalities are looking at their municipal open space grant balances and developing ideas on using those funds. As always, we are tracking our outstanding tree work and queuing up additional work where it's needed. Page asked if there was any word on Green Acres re-organization, since a lot of projects had been stalled there. Bill didn't have any information on Green Acres.

GIS: Patricia Liedner

The HuntHistory app is now active. Right now, we only have a handful of sites that have full histories on them. Cultural and Heritage is looking for cultural volunteers to provide history insight to these sites. There has been no new activity on the Hunterdon Harvest app. We continue to update the COVID-19 Dashboard and the web mapping apps and data sets. We have been working with Human Services to develop Mental Health and prescription Service apps. We also have been working with the state agencies to create a statewide trail inventory. We have been working on several data requests and continuing to work on the new Hunterdon County website.

Projects: Frank Bell

Frank reported that The Emergency Services Training Center (ESTC) burn building had the footings poured and foundation walls are up. We are now waiting for the contractor to come back to install the steel. Working on Phase II to go out to bid. The burn building should be completed sometime in the fall. Library work has started. We are creating a Maker's Space and more conference rooms. This project is funded by a 50/50 matching grant. The last project is a hearing loop for the hearing impaired. We have received \$75,000 from the State. We are using these funds for the Main Library, the Historic Courthouse, and the Commissioners meeting room for the Loop wiring in these building conference rooms.

Planning Issues: Katherine Fullerton

The Growth Management Plan had a kickoff meeting on April 14th. Heyer, Gruel & Associates will be doing the consulting work. We hope to see some progress soon. There has been a steady number of applications coming in, but mostly have been returns. The April 7th DRC had a very detailed subdivision come in for approval. The preliminary subdivision was granted approval. The April 21st DRC meeting had only one application, and that managed to have an extension until today. We are still working with GoHunterdon for a follow-up talk regarding the EV ordinance hopefully in June. The NJTPA 3rd quarter report was submitted and accepted with minimal comments from them. The NJTPA FY23 grant round application is in process. We are discussing what Hunterdon County needs and what NJTPA can offer with the NJTPA grant. The Sustainability Committee gave a report to the Facility Committee, where the opportunities for the County to be sustainable were reviewed.

Department Head: Carrie Fellows

Carrie reported that the NJTPA 3rd Quarter report was submitted. We are working on the PreContract documents for the FY2023 grant, due May 11. We received two notices this week from NJDOT of Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) work that will begin soon:

- The Rockfall Mitigation project in Bethlehem Twp along I-78 is estimated to begin at the end of May
- The Rt 179 Slurry Seal project from Rt. 29 in Lambertville, to 202/31 in East & West Amwell is estimated to begin with single lane closures at the end of May. The County has provided detailed information about, and requested at every opportunity, that the project take place either before or following the Hunterdon County 4-H Fair in late August.

Budget Process

- The 2022 County budget was introduced on April 19.

Cultural & Heritage Commission

- Patty already described GIS Division's work with the HuntHistory app, which is looking fantastic.
- Submitted the application for the 2023-2025 County History Partnership Program (CHPP) grant to the NJ Historical Commission last Friday,
- The C&H Commission is participating in the Arts and Economic Prosperity #6 (AEP6) Survey with Americans for the Arts, to measure local economic impact of arts and culture on Hunterdon County.

There have been lots of grant writing and grant budgets. Parks & Recreation has summer programs on their website, including the Music Under the Stars Concert series in July and August, as well as two movies. Rutgers Cooperative Extension just published their first quarter report, it should be on their website soon. Andy asked if there was any update to the "single seat ride" into Whitehouse? Carrie replied that there was no update at this point, and it appeared

that the whole organization was doing an internal reorganization of some sort. We had indicated that we had interest in this, and Marc Saluk is on the “interested” parties list. Andy also asked if the State has given us any update on the widening of 31 past the Hospital? Carrie replied that it is still on the TIP list, but nothing more yet.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee:

Carol reported that the Committee did not meet this past month. We decided that we would continue to work with GoHunterdon for the breakfast talks, so that has taken care of itself.

Development Review Committee (DRC) Report:

Richard and Andy volunteered for today’s DRC meeting. We have 5 applications. One was an extension, 1 very detailed from Alexandria Township, a minor and another small application. We have one application for May 19th to review so far. Katherine said she would send an email for volunteers. Andy asked if Raritan Township has submitted a modification to HealthQuest area? Katherine replied that she hasn’t had anything come from Raritan, but she would investigate it.

Transportation: Tom Mathews

Tom was not present to give report.

Old Business/New Business:

No new business to report.

Public Comment:

No public comment at this time.

There was no further business to be brought before the Board. Andy Borkin made a motion to adjourn the Planning Board meeting, Richard Dodds seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 9:15AM.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Thursday June 2, 2022, at 8:15 AM

Susan Pena for Secretary, Phil Greiner