

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
MORRIS COUNTY PLANNING BOARD**

30 Schuyler Place
August 6, 2015

Morristown
New Jersey

Vice Chairman Rattner called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. with a salute to the flag.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS LAW

Vice Chairman Rattner stated that the Secretary of the Board provided public notice of this meeting in a legal notice dated January 26, 2015. He reported that a quorum was not present and that the meeting would address information items.

ROLL CALL

Those present were:

Steve Rattner, Vice-Chairman	Deena Leary, Department Director
Ted Eppel	Anthony Soriano, Supervising Planner
Nita Galate, Alternate #2	Greg Perry, Supervising Planner
Roslyn Khurdan, County Engineer Alt.	Joe Barilla, Principal Planner
	Rene Axelrod, Recording Secretary

Presentation

Ms. Meghan Hunscher, Executive Director of the Morris County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC) gave a brief synopsis concerning the functions of the MCEDC and recent MCEDC activities. The MCEDC is a division of the Chamber of Commerce and a public/private partnership with the County of Morris.

She described the core initiatives of the MCEDC, including marketing and branding of the county, business outreach, attraction and retention, developer assistance, programs, events, and local government outreach and support. She stated that there are eight municipal EDC's and that she is meeting with all to discuss best practices. She reported that during the last six months, MCEDC has assisted various local projects, including the Boonton Transit Village and SWOT analysis (Strengths/ Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats) with Pequannock Township and Butler Borough. She stated that she and Ms. Marion are working on a pilot project with the Highlands Council to demonstrate how the development process in the Highlands may be streamlined. She reported that the MCEDC is seeking to strengthen partnerships with various agencies to promote county economic development, including the New Jersey Alliance for Action, the New Jersey Business Action Center, the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties, Choose New Jersey and the New Jersey Department of Tourism. She reported on future MCEDC activities, which focus on reducing office vacancies, increasing business outreach, increasing county marketing efforts and supporting increased strategic planning and partnerships to advance economic progress.

The Board thanked her for her presentation.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

No vote was taken on the June 18, 2015 minutes due to lack of a quorum.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director's June-July 2015 Report will be placed on file.

REPORT OF FUNDS RECEIVED

Funds received for June 2015 totaled \$9,775.

Funds received for July 2015 totaled \$10,465.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Nothing to report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Environment and Watershed

Wastewater Management Plan – Mr. Soriano stated that the Jefferson Township Wastewater Management Plan (WMP) was adopted by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. He informed members that Ms. Michelin continues her work on the WMP chapters for municipalities included in the Rockaway River Valley Sewage Authority.

Land Subdivision and Zoning

Developments Reviewed – Mr. Rattner reported on the August 6, 2015 committee meeting held before the Planning Board meeting. Mr. Rattner noted that the committee reviewed five applications and noted the following two applications:

1. Meridia Transit Plaza, County Route 513, Dover – This is a redevelopment project within downtown Dover for a five story mixed use structure on 1.22 acres. The building will contain 214 apartment units, three small retail spaces and 194 parking spaces under the building. County Engineering will review stormwater management and the intersection of West Blackwell Street and South Sussex Street, which is to be vacated.
2. Port Oram Village, County Road 634, Wharton – This is for a redevelopment of the 1.16 acre Green Tent site into a 49 unit four story apartment building with 96 parking spaces. Mr. Rattner stated the applicant sought county input on the concept plan for this redevelopment and will be requesting two waivers from the County Land Development Standards at the time of the site plan application. County Engineering will review submitted materials and provide comments.

Report of Action for June 2015 and July 2015 will be voted on at next meeting.

Recent Legislation – Mr. Soriano reported that Assembly Bill A1294 was signed into law, extending Right-to-Farm Act protections to commercial beekeepers. He then reported on newly introduced Assembly Bill A4632, which would reform procedures concerning affordable housing. He summarized the major provisions of the bill, noting that the bill is identical to the original version of a bill introduced several years ago, which after incurring various revisions, passed the Legislature. The final amended version of the bill was vetoed by the Governor.

Master Plan & Land Use Ordinance Monthly Report – Mr. Soriano reported that the Borough of Florham Park submitted its 2015 Master Plan Reexamination Report, which updates the Reexamination Report adopted in 2005. The report notes major concerns, including the development of the “Fish Property,” which is one of the largest remaining developable parcels in the Borough. The report also recommends amending zoning for Fairleigh Dickerson University and the College of Saint Elizabeth to reduce the number of variances needed for these sites, which are now zoned for residential use.

Mr. Soriano then summarized the June 2015 and July 2015 Land Use Ordinance Monthly Reports. He stated that the Board received eleven proposed ordinances and twelve adopted ordinances in June. He noted an ordinance from the Borough of Florham Park concerning the rezoning of certain parcels from commercial use to multi-family residential use.

Mr. Soriano stated that there were eight proposed ordinances, four adopted ordinances and one tabled ordinance included in the July 2015 Land Use Ordinance Monthly Report. He noted an ordinance from Hanover Township concerning the sale and serving of alcoholic beverages in certain structures.

Circulation Element update - Mr. Soriano informed the Board that the consultant is conducting a second round of public engagement activities, including attendance at various events in the county in order to obtain public input on the Circulation Plan Element. He reported that County staff have reviewed two draft technical documents, the “Literature Review” and “Inventory and Trends” and that the consultant is currently revising these documents based on the staff’s review. He reported that the consultants should be submitting the next technical document in about a week.

Mr. Soriano then announced that the next TAC meeting will be held in early September, at which time, initial findings and recommendations will be discussed. Following the TAC meeting, the consultant will provide a summary of findings and recommendations on October 1, 2015, which will subsequently be provided to the Board in advance of the October 15, 2015 Planning Board meeting. This meeting will be a joint meeting of the Planning Board, the Board of Transportation and the Freight Rail Advisory Committee. The consultant will present a summary of recommendations at the meeting for Board review. Mr. Soriano stated that a complete draft of the Circulation Plan Element is expected to be submitted by December 31, 2015.

LIAISON REPORTS

Lake Hopatcong Commission – Mr. Soriano stated a report was not submitted by Mr. Jarvis. From meeting notes posted on the Lake Hopatcong Foundation website, 875 cubic yards of weeds were removed from the lake so far this year and current funding will allow the Commission to continue weed harvesting through mid-August, at which time remaining funding must be used to repair equipment in preparation for next year's round of weed harvesting. He reported that the Commission may conduct additional outreach to the Lake Hopatcong communities in an effort to obtain additional funding for weed harvesting.

Ms. Leary reported that she attended an event at which the Morris County Board of Freeholders presented a Morris County Historic Preservation Grant to the Lake Hopatcong Foundation to assist in purchase of the Lake Hopatcong Train Station in Landing. She reported that the lake remains at relatively low levels, despite recent rains. Ms. Galate noted that silt build-up at the bottom of lake is preventing natural springs from supplying the lake from below.

Lake Musconetcong Regional Planning Board/ Musconetcong River Management Council

Mr. Rattner stated that the water chestnut infestation is lower this year and attributed this to the use of herbicides over the last three years. He also reported that the State of New Jersey asked to borrow a weed harvester for a week to address weed problems of the New Jersey Water Supply Authority located in Annandale in Hunterdon County.

Morris County Open Space Trust Fund

Mr. Soriano reported that the Open Space Trust Fund will be reviewing eight applications for a total of 2 ½ million dollars and 141.5 acres. He then reported that there have been two closings in the past three months, the first in Boonton Township for 6.5 acres and the second in Harding Township for 10.6 acres. He noted that, to date, the Trust has preserved 17,399 acres of open space.

Correspondence and Reports Received

Mr. Soriano reported the receipt of a letter from Senator Pennacchio in response to Morris County Planning Board Resolution 2015-2 opposing Senate Bill S-2818, which concerns modifications to requirements for preliminary site plan and subdivision approvals. The Senator wrote that he would keep the Board's concerns in mind should the bill come up for a final vote in the Senate.

Report of Meetings

Nothing to Report.

Other Business

Affordable Housing Update – Mr. Soriano stated that towns wanting to participate in the new court process and obtain court protection had to file by July 9, 2015 for declarative judgement and temporary immunity. He reported that 25 towns in Morris County have submitted their declaratory judgement requests to the court and that these municipalities have four months remaining by which to submit new affordable housing plans for judicial review.

Soil Health Webinar – Mr. Soriano announced that Ms. Michelin and Mr. Barilla have developed a two part webinar series on soil health in association with the New Jersey Section of the American Water Resources Association. The webinar sessions will be held on September 25, 2015 at 11 a.m. and October 30, 2015 at 11 a.m. He reported that staff sent information on the Soil Health webinar to municipalities. He distributed a flyer on the Soil Health webinar to the Board members.

LEGAL UPDATE

No report.

Comments from the Public

None

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for September 17, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:07 p.m., Ms. Khurdan moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Galate seconded, and all approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Marion, P.P./AICP
Planning Director

Original was signed and is on file at the office of the Morris County Planning Board.