

**MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 21, 2023
MEETING OF THE SOMERSET COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
HELD AT 4:45 P.M.
IN PERSON MEETING**

Call to Order

The February 21, 2023 meeting of the Somerset County Planning Board convened at 4:49 p.m. This meeting was held in person.

Pledge of Allegiance

Open Public Meetings Statement

Chairman Bernard V. Navatto Jr. reported the meeting had been duly advertised in accordance with Open Public Meetings Act as follows:

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., and the Emergency Remote Meeting Protocol for Local Public Bodies N.J.A.C. 5:39-1.1 through 1.7, adequate notice of this meeting has been provided. The date, time and location for this meeting was published in The Star Ledger and the Courier News. The agenda and the meeting information was also posted on the County Planning Board website.

The Roll was called, and the following were in Attendance:

Bernard V. Navatto, Jr, Chairman
Michael Giordano, Vice-Chair
Christopher Kelly, Member
Commissioner Paul Drake
Adam Slutsky for Matthew D. Loper, Board Secretary

Absent

Albert Ellis, Member
Erika Inocencio, Member
Sami Shaban, Member
Commissioner Director Shanel Y. Robinson
Ashok Rakhit, 1st Alternate

Also Present from Staff:

Walter Lane, Director, Office of Planning, Policy & Economic Development
Angela Knowles, Deputy Director, Office of Planning, Policy & Economic Development
Kaitlin Bundy, Cultural & Heritage Manager
Aarthy Sabesan, Manager, Office of GIS Services
Thomas D'Amico, Supervising Planner
Ken Wedeen, Supervising Transportation Planner

Adam Bradford, Sr. Transportation Planner
Naghma Malik, GIS Services Coordinator
Sheli Daniels, Office Manager
Charissa Hammerman, Esq., covering for Joseph DeMarco, Esq., County Counsel

Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Chairman Navatto called for a motion to approve the January 17, 2023 Planning Board Meeting Minutes. The motion was made by Board Member Chris Kelly and seconded by Vice Chair Michael Giordano. A voice vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS / INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Delaware-Raritan Transit Corridor Studio Class Presentation

Tom Dallessio from the Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy at Rutgers University and three second-year students: Falaknaaz Patni, Shahan Ahmed & Kyrillos (Cyril) Girgis; presented results of the Delaware-Raritan Transit Corridor Studio Class and the proposed “blue sky” plan for reactivating passenger service on the West Trenton rail line. The Executive Summary of the report was included in the Board Packet. The PowerPoint presentation is available for review at the Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development.

January Planning Directors Report

Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development Director Walter Lane reported that during the May Association of Counties Conference he and Commissioner Director Robinson will be on a panel regarding the County’s open space planning efforts and the Preservation Plan. Mr. Lane also mentioned that the County will be hosting a meeting with the NJ Chapter of the American Planning Association and the County Planners Association to discuss potential partnerships and joint projects. He stated he and Jessica Paolini are continuing to work with Bedminster Township on promoting the repurposing of the AT&T site and the Township’s Plan Endorsement efforts. The Planning Partners Forums are scheduled for Tuesdays, March 28, June 13, September 28 and December 12. Lastly, he announced that he was disappointed to report that Adam Bradford will be resigning from the County and thanked Adam for his contributions to the Office.

February 2023 Land Development Committee Report and Approval of the January 2023 First Time Submissions

Supervising Planner Tom D’Amico reported that there was no February Land Development Committee meeting. Therefore, the County Planning Board must approve the first-time submissions for January 2023. During the month, the County Planning Board reviewed a total of 17 submissions. There were eight new lots proposed. There was no new square footage of non-residential building space proposed, however, there was 35,404 square feet of residential building space proposed. There was \$2,908.00 in development review fees paid to the County Planning Board as well as \$3,217.00 in improvement value

posted with the County Planning Board. Mr. D'Amico recommended the Board make a motion to approve the January First Time Submissions. Board Member, Chris Kelly, made the motion and Vice Chair, Michael Giordano, seconded it. The roll was called, and the motion was passed unanimously.

Keep Somerset Moving: Transportation Plan 2045 Update

Supervising Transportation Planner Ken Wedeen reported that on January 19th, the Keep Somerset Moving: Transportation Plan 2045 study hosted a Technical Advisory Committee meeting and a public meeting was held on February 1st. The virtual public meeting had over 80 participants as the consultant team presented their study findings including comments from the public outreach process including focus groups, pop up events, study email comments, an online survey and online mapping exercise. The consultant presentation also included a summary of a crash, bike level of stress and equity analyses.

Mr. Wedeen went on to say the second part of the public meeting included virtual breakout rooms at which county and consultant staff asked a series of questions to solicit public input as to what they felt were the county's transportation issues and opportunities. The consultant summarized the issues at the end of the meeting in a question-and-answer session. The video of the public meeting presentation and question and answer session and a PDF of the PowerPoint presentation have been posted on the study web page.

The consultant team is working to summarize the public meeting. Finally, the consultant team will begin preparing a series of recommendations based on their analysis and public comments. The draft circulation element will be distributed for public comment during summer 2023.

Regional Flooding Roundtable Initiative

Deputy Director Angela Knowles reported that the comment letter on the NJ Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP) Flood Hazard Area and Stormwater Management Rules has been submitted to the Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). Ms. Knowles further reported that Friday February 17th she presented at The Watershed Institute's 6th Annual Watershed Conference, presenting on the County's regional approach to storm water management. Ms. Knowles stated she was on a panel with the Pennsylvania Director for the Center for Watershed Protection.

Wastewater Management Plan Update

Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development Director Walter Lane stated that the Office has been asked by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to update the buildout table in the draft Wastewater Management Plan (WMP) based on a proposal from an applicant. The updates will involve minor changes to the Facilities table in the WMP.

The Office received an update from NJDEP on the draft Wastewater Management Plan which was submitted to NJDEP in June 2021 and has been under review since that time. NJDEP reported the Septic

Management Plan Component should be published for adoption in the NJ Register in the next month or two.

Public Comments

No members of the public were present.

Committee Reports

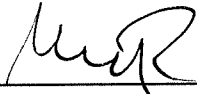
Committee Reports were included with the meeting packet.

Next meeting Date: March 21, 2023 @ 4:45 Regular in Person Meeting

Adjournment

There being no further business before the board Chairman Navato asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was moved by Michael Giordano and seconded by Chris Kelly. A voice vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Matthew D. Loper, Secretary