

**MINUTES OF THE JULY 18, 2023  
MEETING OF THE SOMERSET COUNTY PLANNING BOARD  
HELD AT 4:45 P.M.  
IN PERSON MEETING**

**Call to Order**

The July 18, 2023 meeting of the Somerset County Planning Board convened at 4:45 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 virtual meeting information for this meeting was published in The Star Ledger and the Courier News. The agenda and the virtual 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  
Erika Inocencio, Member  
Sami Shaban, Member  
Commissioner Paul Drake  
Adam Slutsky

**Absent**

Albert Ellis, Member  
Christopher Kelly, Member  
Commissioner Director Shanel Y. Robinson  
Matt Loper, Secretary  
Ashok Rakhit, 1<sup>st</sup> Alternate

**Also Present from Staff:**

Walter Lane, Director, Office of Planning, Policy & Economic Development  
Thomas D'Amico, Supervising Planner

Tom Boccino, Supervising Planner, Preservation  
Jessica Paolini, Manager Economic Development  
Kaitlin Bundy, Manager Culture & Heritage  
Erika Phillips, Principal Community Planner  
Josephine Taranto, Preservation Planner  
Naghma Malik, GIS Services Coordinator  
Stephanie Ladas, GIS Specialist  
Jonathan Eagle, Senior Transportation Planner  
Patrice Brown, Administrative Assistant (sitting in for Sheli Daniels, Office Manager)  
Marina Stinely, Esq. covering for Joseph DeMarco, Esq., Deputy County Counsel

### **Approval of the Meeting Minutes**

Chairman Navatto called for a motion to approve the June 20, 2023 Planning Board Meeting Minutes. The motion was moved by Michael Giordano and seconded by Paul Drake. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **DISCUSSION/PRESENTATION ITEMS**

#### **Resolution Concerning a proposed Site-Specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) Amendment for 00 Hamilton, LLC PI 435434/AMD230001**

Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development Director Walter Lane provided a brief summary of the proposed Site-Specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) Amendment for 00 Hamilton project in Hillsborough Township. At the April 2023 Somerset County Planning Board Meeting, Ryan Elkholy, PhD, PE, the applicant of a proposed Site-Specific Wastewater Management Amendment for 00 Hamilton Road LLC, Block 183.05, Lot 35, Hillsborough Township provided an overview of the proposed project.

Based upon the information provided by Mr. Elkholy, Hillsborough Township support of the proposed project as well as the Board's review of the application, the Board approved the submission of a letter to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) in support of the proposed Site-Specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) Amendment. This letter was sent to NJDEP in late May.

NJDEP published the Site-Specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) Amendment for 00 Hamilton, LLC in the NJ Register on July 17, 2023. Staff also received a request for a consent resolution from the Somerset County Planning Board from the applicant on July 10, 2023. Director Lane asked the Board to approve the draft resolution of consent for this project which was included in the Board's Meeting Packet.

Chairman Navatto called for a motion to approve the resolution. The motion was moved by Michael Giordano and seconded by Adam Slutsky. The roll was called, and the motion passed unanimously.

## **Planning Director's Report**

Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development Director Walter Lane reported the Somerset County Preservation Plan has been named a 2023 Smart Growth Award winner by NJ Future. The awards ceremony will be at the New Brunswick Performing Arts Center on October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30pm.

The next Planning Partners Forum is on September 26<sup>th</sup> at 8am. The guest presenter will be Jef Buehler, Manager and Placemaking Specialist from the NJ Business Action Center. He will share information on the various programs the State offers to municipalities to support and assist downtowns and small businesses.

Director Lane shared that staff continues to provide planning and economic development assistance and support to numerous municipalities. He continues to assist Bedminster Township advance recommendations from the Supporting Priority Investment in Somerset County initiative. He has provided testimony at the Township's Local Land Use Board and Township Committee Meetings in support of master plan and zoning changes recommended in the County's recent planning efforts.

He also reported the Office of Economic Development continues to promote economic development opportunities in the County. An article pitched by Jessica Paolini regarding the County's work to support the life sciences through developing a clean room at Raritan Valley Community College including the recent investment the County made in the Workforce Training Center at RVCC was featured in July 2023 edition of Site Selection Magazine. This magazine is a leading economic development publication with an international audience.

Director Lane also introduced the newest member of the Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development Jonathan Eagle. Mr. Eagle is the new Senior transportation Planner and a recent Master of City and Regional Planning graduate from Rutgers University.

## **ACTION/INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

### **Land Development Committee Report for July 2023 and Approval of the June 2023 First-time Submissions**

Supervising Planner Tom D'Amico reported that the Land Development Committee did not meet this month. Therefore, the full County Planning Board must approve the First Time Submissions for the month of June 2023.

### **June First Time Submissions**

During the month, the County Planning Board reviewed a total of fifteen (15) submissions. There was one new lot proposed and seven lots created. Of the site plans proposed during the month there was 4,200 square feet of non-residential building space proposed as well as 45 multi-family units. There

was \$6,020 in development review fees and \$48,299.00 in improvement value paid to the County Planning Board.

Chairman Navatto called for a motion to approve the July 2023 Land Development Committee Report as well the June 2023 First Time Submissions. The motion was moved by Mike Giordano and seconded by Paul Drake. The roll was called, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Circulation Plan Update**

Supervising Transportation Planner Ken Wedeen summarized that since the last Planning Board meeting planning and engineering staff have been working with the consultant team on completing the last data analysis for the state bridges data layer and levels of service (LTS). Planning and Engineering staff have been working on developing guidelines for Engineering to review plans that may require right of way dedication to preserve county right of way on county roads.

Mr. Wedeen stated that staff has compiled comments for several draft tech memos which were delivered to the consultant for review. Staff has been reviewing a draft excel spreadsheet listing projects and strategies to be included in the draft final plan. Planning staff and the consultant agreed to the work schedule for the study including the schedule. A brief summary of the project timeline was provided by Mr. Wedeen.

### **Resolution Honoring Thomas R. D'Amico**

Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development Director Walter Lane read the resolution honoring Thomas R. D'Amico into the record. He thanked Mr. D'Amico for all of the great work he has done in his many years of service to Somerset County. Director Lane also thanked Mr. D'Amico for all of his guidance, advice and support throughout Director Lane's career. He encouraged the Board to attend the retirement party which is being held the following week.

Chairman Navatto moved the motion to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by Michael Giordano and by Paul Drake. The roll was called, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Wastewater Management Plan**

Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development Director Walter Lane summarized the status of the County's wastewater planning efforts. The NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) has not responded to Director Lane's recent inquiry regarding the status of the adoption of the Septic Management Plan Component or provided any initial comments on the draft Wastewater Management Plan, which was submitted to NJDEP in June 2021 and has been under review since that time. Director Lane stated he will follow-up with NJDEP within the next few days.

Director Lane also reported he had briefed the Master Plan Committee last week about four (4) proposed site-specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) amendments. Two proposed site-specific Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP) amendments are located in Hillsborough Township,

one is in Manville Borough and the other is located in Branchburg Township. Consistency review letters will be drafted for both the Master Plan Committee and Environment and Utilities Committee to review prior to the full Board being asked to review and approve the letters.

**Public Comments**

No members of the public were present.

**Committee Reports**

Committee Reports were included with the meeting packet.

**Next meeting Date**

August 15, 2023 @ 4:45 Regular In Person Meeting

There being no further business before the Board Chairman Navatto asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was moved by Mike Giordano and seconded by Erica Inocencio. A voice vote was called and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 5:12pm.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Matthew D. Loper, Secretary