

SUSSEX COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

MINUTES

MAY 4, 2015

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Gstattenbauer at 4:00 p.m. The meeting is held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, NJSA 10:4-2 of 1975, as amended. Present were:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Daniel Conkling
Dr. John Ford
Michael Francis
Wolfgang Gstattenbauer, Vice Chairman
Walter Cramp, County Engineer
George Graham, Freeholder Member
Rich Vohden, Freeholder Alternate

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Andy Borisuk, Chairman
Gene Crawford, 1st Alternate
Dan Flynn, 2nd Alternate

STAFF PRESENT:

Eric Snyder, Planning Director
Alice Brees, Principal Planner
Antoinette Wasiewicz, Recording Secretary
John Risko, Engineering Department
Tom Drabic, Planning Division

ALSO PRESENT:

Jeffrey C. Careaga, P.E., Careaga Engineering
Ronald Heymann, Esq., Greentree Development
Zenobia Fields, NJTPA

MINUTES

A motion was made by Richard Vohden to approve the Minutes of April 6, 2015 as presented. The motion was seconded by Michael Francis. All were in favor with abstentions from Wolfgang Gstattenbauer and Walter Cramp. Motion carried.

SITE PLAN/SUBDIVISION DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORTS

A motion was made by Michael Francis to approve the Development Review Committee Report for April 6, 2015 as presented. The motion was seconded by John Ford. All were in favor with abstentions from Wolfgang Gstattenbauer and Walter Cramp. Motion carried.

APPEALS AND WAIVER REQUESTS

A. RESOLUTION FOR AIRPORT ROAD PROPERTIES, LLC, PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN #3(PSP)15, ROUTE 605, HOPATCONG BOROUGH:

Eric Snyder said there were a few minor amendments requested by the applicant, none of which changed anything of substance to the Board's action. He asked the Board if they wanted him to read them. The Board agreed they were comfortable with approving the Resolution. A motion was made by Michael Francis to memorialize the Resolution for the Airport Road Properties, LLC Preliminary Site Plan as amended. The motion was seconded by Daniel Conklin and carried unanimously.

B. RESOLUTIONS FOR SUSSEX COMMONS ASSOCIATES, LLC, FILE #94(CSS)04, ROUTES 206 AND 565, FRANKFORD TOWNSHIP – TRAFFIC REPORT REGARDING WAIVER FOR SECOND ACCESS:

Eric Snyder said the applicant's attorney indicated that he was happy with the Resolution as written. A motion was made by George Graham to memorialize the Resolutions for the Sussex Commons Associates, LLC Subdivision and Site Plan and the waiver for the second access. The motion was seconded by Richard Vohden and carried unanimously.

C. GREENTREE AT HOPATCONG, LLC, PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN #25A(PSP)13, ROUTE 607, HOPATCONG BOROUGH:

Mr. Heymann said this Site Plan application is for residential and commercial use. He said there have been some issues with off-site parking. They have negotiated with the school board and the municipality for additional parking areas.

Mr. Careaga was sworn by Eric Snyder. Mr. Careaga displayed a map (Sheet #4 of 23) which is part of the Site Plan application. The map shows off-site construction plans on River Styx Road (Route 607) with an off-site parking lot. The parking lot has 67 spaces and is currently being used by the school across the street. They plan to combine the existing school parking lot with an existing municipal right-of-way to get the off-site parking. The off-site parking utilizes two existing driveway entrances that service the school parking lot. A portion of the parking lot will be dedicated to the school using the entrance closest to the school. There is no thru- traffic between the two different parts of the parking lot. The rest of the parking lot will be used for the proposed building across the street. The parking lot will be posted to keep the general public out of the school parking lot.

Mr. Careaga said there will also be an improvement of a crosswalk where there is an existing walkway. Walter Cramp said there are two exits to the parking lot on the opposite side of the street. He asked if the one access close to the intersection was both an in and out access. Mr. Careaga said it was and that it has been functioning that way for many years. Mr. Cramp said since the parking lot access is close to the intersection, it is going to block the queue of traffic going west.

The applicant is proposing a substantial amount of improvements on River Styx Road. They are widening the road to allow for parallel parking on the side of the road in accordance with Hopatcong's Zoning Ordinances for the development of a main street and in accordance with Sussex County's regulations. They are proposing street trees and street lighting. There will be a nice, wide sidewalk which ranges from 12-14'. There may be some slight modifications of the actual curbing location based on a recent survey of River Styx Road because of development that is occurring down the street. Mr. Risko wanted the entire street surveyed so that everything will be consistent. Mr. Careaga said there were a lot of contradictory deeds and it was difficult to survey because of the old maps.

Mr. Careaga said they will add additional storm drainage and that there are some inlets tying into an existing pipe that is in the street. The storm draining system is from the school parking lot and there will be an inlet added on River Styx Road from the underground stormwater detention basin under the parking lot. All of the reductions have been met as far as State and local standards for stormwater.

Mr. Heymann said each of the residential units will get a dedicated parking spot with garage space. He said this is the first phase of a beautification program and that the town has already given their approval for nine residential units.

Alice Brees asked Mr. Careaga to talk about the sight distance waivers. Mr. Careaga said for the crosswalk, sight distance requirements for the County going west is 335', they have 180'. He said they meet the sight distance requirements for the other direction. Mr. Risko said the waiver requests are for the driveways only. The crosswalk is not a matter for the Planning Board. Mr. Careaga said they meet the 260' requirement for sight stopping distance.

George Graham asked what the speed limit is on Route 607. Mr. Careaga said the speed limit is posted at 30 MPH, and there is a traffic light at the intersection. Eric Snyder said there is an off-site parking lot and people can be expected to cross the County road. He said they need to consider how to get them from one point to the other safely. That's what the study covered. There was some discussion about traffic calming strategies.

Mr. Careaga said he does not know if there will be any change to the speed limit now that traffic calming measures are in place. He feels the speed limit should be dropped down to 25 MPH in that zone. Mr. Risko said the speed limit is regulated by State Statute. Mr. Vohden asked if the speed limit is 30 MPH only for that stretch or for the entire road. Mr. Careaga said it is 30 MPH for that stretch. Mr. Snyder said the speed limit is 35 MPH on Route 607 after you cross the bridge.

John Ford asked how many residential units are planned. Mr. Heymann said there were 16 residential units planned and confirmed that there is 4,600 square feet planned for commercial use. Mr. Careaga said that Hopatcong requires that all of the residential parking to be on-site. Some of the parking for the commercial use will be on-site. Mr. Ford confirmed that the 30 parking spaces for the residents include the garage space. Mr. Heymann said each unit will receive one dedicated parking space. There will be parking available on-site for another car and there will be overflow parking in the school's parking lot. Mr. Careaga said there are a lot more spaces in the off-site parking. This was required in their full site plan with the intention that they will be used for future development. Daniel Conkling asked how long the agreement with the school is good for. Mr. Heymann said he the agreement is good in perpetuity. Mr. Francis said they had to go to Trenton for the permanent agreement.

Mr. Careaga said for the driveway entrance closest to the traffic light, they are required to have 335' of sight distance in that direction; they have 268'. They are required to have 290' of sight distance in the other direction; and they have 264' available. They do meet the stopping sight distance requirements.

Mr. Cramp confirmed that the parking access closest to the intersection is for the school, that it was a pre-existing condition and that people coming in to the overflow parking cannot use that access. Mr. Careaga said that was correct. Mr. Vohden asked if there was a signal there now. Mr. Snyder said there was.

The meeting was opened to the public. No public was present. The meeting was closed to the public.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Daniel Conkling to approve the sight distance waiver requests. The motion was seconded by George Graham. A roll-call vote was taken. Results were as follows: Daniel Conkling-Yes; John Ford-Yes; Michael Francis-Yes; Wolfgang Gstattenbauer-Yes; Walter Cramp-Yes; George Graham-Yes; and Richard Vohden-Yes. Motion carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Eric Snyder did not have a report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

A. TOGETHER NORTH JERSEY:

Eric Snyder said representatives are here today from Together North Jersey, an organization working from the Federal government to do a plan for the North Jersey

Transportation Planning Authority area. The North Jersey Transportation Authority area is comprised of 13 counties and five cities. They asked to make a presentation of where we are, where do we want to go and how do we get there?

John Carnegie said he is the Executive Director of the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center at the Bloustein School at Rutgers University and also the Project Director for Together North Jersey. Together North Jersey is a voluntary partnership of more than 100 jurisdictions, local and county organizations, agencies, authorities and such in the 13 counties that make up the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority region. They came together more than three years ago to apply for and implement a grant that they received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, on behalf of the region, as part of the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program. Rutgers University and the Bloustein School acted as the administrator and fiscal agent for the grant and they maintain a management structure throughout the three-year planning process that includes representation from the County on their Steering Committee.

Mr. Carnegie said the primary activities of the Together North Jersey group were to develop a regional plan for sustainable development. As part of the process to develop the plan, they undertook an extensive outreach process. They conducted a fair housing and equity assessment, which was a requirement of the grant; looked at historic patterns of segregation, concentration of poverty and access to opportunity in the region in terms of how different places have access to well-paying jobs, high-performing schools, safe neighborhoods, etc. He said that Zenobia Fields will give the Board more detail on the regional process to develop a comprehensive economic development strategy for the 13 county region.

While the regional planning process was going on, they also went through an effort to pass through a significant portion of the funding, both from the HUD Grant as well as the matching dollars that they were required to obtain. These were invested in 40 local planning projects throughout the region. One of these planning projects was an economic status report on the economic development conditions here in Sussex County through their local government capacity grant program. There were also 39 other projects of all types around the region, some competitive and some were granted through the action of the Steering Committee for the overall effort. Finally, there was a technical assistance program where they sponsored educational events and tried to build the capacity of entities in the region to implement sustainable community development in a variety of ways, including exploring "Health in all Policies" which is the recognition that all of the decisions we make in planning and public policy have an impact on community and public health, not just access to health care. There are many other things that help to determine long-term health outcomes, built environment conditions, ability to walk safely, etc. There were several other educational events throughout the course of the project, including a regional summit on creative place making and crime prevention through environmental design.

Mr. Carnegie said their overall planning process had three phases: Discovery, Visioning and Action Planning. They tried to make the process accessible to local leaders and the general public by asking some very simple, straight-forward questions:

Where are we today as a region and where are we heading in terms of the trends, demography and economic conditions? Where do we want to go as a region in the communities that make up the region as well as the region as a whole? And then, How do we get there, how do we achieve the goals that we set for ourselves and the vision that we outline in terms of desired long-term outcomes?

During the Discovery Phase, they undertook a variety of technical activities, including the collection and analysis of data under 12 topics. They conducted outreach events and activities, including public workshops, neighborhood scale workshops, mall kiosks, etc., to take a strategic look at what their strengths and weaknesses are. All of the Discovery Phase information helped to form the basis of the Visioning Phase.

The Visioning Phase took the Discovery Phase information as the basis for asking another key question: Where does the public think the region should grow in terms of future jobs, housing and the location of future population. This question was taken out to shopping malls, college campuses, neighborhood group meetings and a variety of other settings around the region. They spoke to approximately 2,500 residents during this phase. The results became the early sections of the regional plan. Mr. Carnegie said the five priority goals are to grow a strong regional economy, create great places, increase access to opportunity, protect the environment and to continue to work together towards the shared vision.

The Action Planning phase was mostly done through stakeholder meetings. They had three standing committees who did much of the work. Those committees included representatives from the County, about 150 stakeholders comprised of experts, organization leaders, civic leaders, etc. They asked those people to identify the strategies that could help to achieve the vision that was laid out in the first two phases according to the 12 topics they were discussing. More than 100 strategies were identified for addressing those issues. Those strategies were pared down to the 73 strategies that appear in the plan. The stakeholders were asked to help develop very specific action steps, timelines and responsibilities for each of those strategies.

During the Action Planning phase, they did a summer series of guest hosts on NJ.com, called "Improving the Quality of Life in New Jersey." The 30 posts ultimately resulted in about 520,000 page views on NJ.com and they garnered about 2,000 individual comments. Many of those posts were accompanied by interactive engagement activity with the public online. These ranged from a live video chat to moderated questions and answers in the comment section of the website. They also did a number of polls and quizzes to talk about the issues that were facing the region and to explore some of the solutions that were under consideration as part of the Action Planning Phase.

The Together North Jersey Plan was released in March 2015. The organization of the Plan was intended to follow the process he described and to be as accessible as possible to the general public and to elected and appointed officials who will have the responsibility to shepherd implementation of the recommended strategies over time. The Vision section and the How We Get There section are all organized into four

themes which formed the basis for the Sustainable Region. These include being competitive, efficient, livable and resilient.

The strategies are grouped into 16 focus areas:

- Focus Area 1: Create and Maintain well-paying jobs by supporting growth in our regional's key industries
- Focus Area 2: Enhance North Jersey's innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem
- Focus Area 3: Strengthen the region's economy by building on existing assets and infrastructure
- Focus Area 4: Align workforce training with industry needs
- Focus Area 5: Locate most new housing and commercial development in places with existing and planned infrastructure
- Focus Area 6: Create vibrant places and neighborhoods that will attract and retain residents, workers and visitors
- Focus Area 7: Connect people and places with safe, convenient and reliable transportation
- Focus Area 8A: Expand and diversify the region's housing supply to meet current and future demand
- Focus Area 8B: Address barriers to housing mobility, increase access to areas of high opportunity and affirmatively further fair housing policies region-wide
- Focus Area 9: Create a system of public education that prepares all students for the 21st century economy
- Focus Area 10: Enhance the resiliency of the region's communities and infrastructure
- Focus Area 11: Transition to a "Clean Energy Economy"
- Focus Area 12: Improve health outcomes for our region's residents
- Focus Area 13: Improve stewardship of natural lands, agricultural lands, open space and parks
- Focus Area 14: Manage water systems to improve water quality and supply
- Focus Area 15: Revitalize and strengthen communities by expanding arts and cultural communities

Mr. Carnegie said in the Plan there are 73 strategies within the 16 Focus Areas and each has a specific action plan attached to them. These are not in the Plan, but are online at togethernorthjersey.com. Each of the action plans is a starting point as we move from the planning phase to implementation. There is also a Leading the Way Chapter in the Plan which highlights the forty local projects which are organized by theme: Competitive, Efficient, Livable and Resilient. Finally, there is a Making it All Happen Chapter which is a framework of next steps. As part of that Chapter, they talk about the need to come to grips with the investment needs relative to infrastructure, transportation, wastewater, potable water, educational infrastructure, etc. They are facing billions of dollars of required investment to help the region remain or become competitive once again. There is also a section on aligning existing policies, plans and incentive programs. Throughout the Plan there are a number of pilot programs that are recommended. Mr. Carnegie said they are trying to figure out how Together North Jersey, in a 2.0 version that is more focused on implementation, can add value to local

governments and the county jurisdictions in the region in terms of helping them to voluntarily take the steps as recommended in the Plan. This will probably happen over the next few months with members of NJTPA's Board and other participants from the Together North Jersey effort. They hope to define a program within 12-18 months that will help to advance implementation.

Mr. Carnegie said the Plan document itself, which is 100 pages long, is the main piece but there are a number of other elements that have been incorporated by reference throughout the Plan, including the Strategy Action Plans, final reports from all of the local projects, the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and the Fair Housing and Equity Assessment.

When asked if there will be a final edition to this Plan, Mr. Carnegie said that Sussex County was the 11th of their 11 meetings with all of the counties. In addition to the comments that they've received during the public review period, they are absorbing additional comments and will be incorporating those, where they can, into the version that has been circulated and then there will be final release of the document, most likely in June. Ms. Fields said the initial Plan was meant to be a digestible part of it, so it is only about 75-100 pages and then there are appendices that go with it.

John Ford had a question regarding "Where Should We Grow" on Page 9. He asked if this was a footprint or a guideline that they are following. Mr. Carnegie said it was meant to be illustrative. This is what the public around the region was saying to them. It is known information, not a map and it is reflected in the strategies, especially the strategy relating to land use. Mr. Ford also asked if the funding for implementation will be private or Federal and State. Mr. Carnegie said that implementation is voluntary and it depends on individual and collective actions by all of the jurisdictions and agencies that have authority to do something about the future. There needs to be conversation about what resources are available that can be oriented towards implementing some of the strategies; what additional revenues will be needed; and how can we get those, through the public and private sources. Mr. Snyder said one of the differences between this effort and the State Planning effort is that there is a focus in the implementation phase of getting the business leaders of the State together. It is the businesses that make things happen. Ms. Fields said one of the things they are looking at in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is how are we going to tap into that private sector of knowledge. They are also going to be looking at different outreach events on an annual basis.

Ms. Fields said she is with the North Jersey Transportation Authority. Freeholder Vohden is on their Board of Trustees. When projecting into the future, 25 years out, regarding population and jobs, they speak to developers and other entities to determine where growth is going. Sussex County has already been partners in their implementation and already did a Complete Streets Corridor Study. As a metropolitan planning organization, the North Jersey Transportation Authority offers some grant assistance to keep that effort going. They have a Transportation Alternatives Program funding. Ms. Fields said that Eric Snyder is very actively involved in the Morris Canal Greenway Project and that this is an example of something that they are moving towards with implementation.

Ms. Fields said they wanted to create a roadmap to prosperity and access to opportunities. They did not want to come in as a regional organization and say these are our regional priorities and this is how you should implement them on a local level. They are depending on their relationships with the municipalities and counties to accomplish that. They engaged some of the counties that already had embarked on looking at either economic development strategy or developing a comprehensive CEDS. They looked at regional issues, local needs and regional responses.

Ms. Fields said their 13-county area goes from Sussex County to Hudson County and down to Ocean County. The Somerset County effort represents a suburban perspective and Hudson County represents an urban perspective. Hunterdon County, where they developed this with the Together North Jersey Funds, developed their own regional CEDS effort. Therefore, they have a diverse set of strategies to show as a set of best practices.

There are about 24 strategies in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy that are divided into four different categories: Regional Innovation Clusters, Small Business and Entrepreneurial Support, Infrastructure Assets and Workforce Training.

In the Regional Innovation Clusters they are looking to create an Economic Development District, to streamline state and local permitting processes and to host annual outreach events for each Regional Innovation Cluster.

The second set of strategies, Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development, looks to foster other types of shared workspaces and connect these workspaces to economic development and finance programs.

Asset Based Infrastructure looks to provide incentives packages targeted at job creation and private-sector investment in vacant land ripe for redevelopment such as suburban office parks and brownfields.

The Workforce Training and Development strategy looks to create a demand-driven workforce development system tailored to employer needs.

Ms. Fields said as a Metropolitan and Planning Organization, they get a lot of their guidance from the Federal Transportation Organizations. The areas they are hearing about are regional cooperation, integrating efforts and ladders to opportunity. They identify issues in their long-range plan. They are mandated to develop a Regional Transportation Plan. That is the Transportation component to the Together North Jersey Plan, the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development. That in turn aligns with the draft State Strategic Plan in trying to highlight these things and how they can be moved toward implementation.

Wolfgang Gstatenbauer asked what the biggest obstacle in moving toward these goals is. Mr. Carnegie said sometimes he thinks money will be the biggest challenge but said we already have a lot of resources and communicating how we can better align things with priorities that are in the plan could have amazing strength. It is all voluntary so it will be about keeping people's attention on the fact that they are making decisions all

the time that have an impact on the region's economy, its resiliency, its ability, its efficiency, etc. He said if they maintain Together North Jersey in a new iteration, it might keep the focus on the fact that we can work together as a region to implement these things. The fact that it is all voluntary is both the beauty and the constraint of this effort.

Mr. Gstattenbauer asked the same question of Ms. Fields. She said that even though coordination is probably the easiest thing they do, it can also be the hardest. It is hard to get everyone to think about the same thing at the same time. She said, in looking at economic development as a traditional transportation organization, they received a lot of resistance at first. It takes time and you need to repeat your message over and over again and you need to win people's trust. She believes that is their biggest obstacle.

Mr. Gstattenbauer also asked what incentives does industry have to create an apprenticeship program. Mr. Carnegie said there is no shortage of industries that have job openings without the appropriate workers to fill them. Many of them are not requiring Bachelor's degrees or advanced degrees. They are hoping that there is sufficient interest on private industry's part to work with the many existing programs that are out there to try bringing some rationale to them and to focus more on what the industries need rather than on what we think the industries need. Mr. Snyder said there have been examples where industry groups have come together and actually established these kinds of programs because they are not available in the extreme of people who work for them. It can happen, but it is a matter of, "Does the business community want to come together to make it happen?" Money is an issue. It costs money to run these programs, it takes commitment to run them long-term and in looking at who is going to benefit from this. It's the industry that is going to benefit and they are best suited to invest in a long-term commitment because they have the real incentive to be properly supplied with labor. Ms. Fields said a concrete example is that they are looking for the skill set of welding. A professional welder's job pays \$150,000.00 a year. This skill set is being lost. They need that next generation so when the baby boomers retire; there is someone else that can take over this skill.

George Graham said a study was done which showed a wide gap in skill trades and the pipeline of people coming to fill it. These are all very well-paying jobs but the message isn't getting through to young people that this is a good opportunity to create a solid future for them. There is a value to doing this at a regional scale because you don't need to have 13 programs or all the different community colleges. There is some value in organization at a regional scale that people can feed into from whatever geography they're in.

B. PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SUSSEX COUNTY, 2006 – SPRING 2015:

Alice Brees provided the Board with a table showing an overview of projects over the eight years. The projects are listed by Planning Board file number, the Applicant name, Town, County Route, Road Name, Lots, Units and Description. Daniel Conkling said the table does not show a subdivision in Green Township. Ms. Brees said in some

cases, the file may not be moving forward, especially for some subdivisions. She also said she plans to e-mail this to the towns' Planning Board secretaries.

George Graham said he and Eric Snyder attended a meeting last week of the National Parks. There was one very significant statement that was made about why there is so much done on the Pennsylvania side and not on the New Jersey side. He asked Mr. Snyder to speak about this. Mr. Snyder said Pennsylvania and the Pocono region have focused a lot of effort and money on their side of the river. The Pocono region has a very strong regional effort that's been marketing and advocating for development for a very long time. The whole recreation industry has been there for a long time. Pike and Monroe used to be our affordable housing. People moved out of Sussex County and went west. The tide has now turned. New Jersey has spent nothing. One of New Jersey's major impediments is the DEP. Despite the fact that, if you put sewer service in, you can treat effluent to a higher standard than what a septic system is capable of providing, they keep fighting it. That has gotten in the way of many efforts and added millions of dollars to the efforts that have been successful. Mr. Graham said the National Park made a point of saying that even a simple thing like a Visitor's Center would run into vast amounts of DEP red tape; whereas on the Pennsylvania side, it was simple. Richard Vohden said Pennsylvania has a main road that runs parallel with the river which has more private properties. The State took all the private properties on the Jersey side. Mr. Vohden said there is a Regional Plan Association which covers Connecticut, North Jersey and New York City. They set the areas for growth and recreation. No matter with whom they connect Sussex County; we're going to be the no-growth area.

Mr. Snyder said Together North Jersey's effort is all voluntary but because there is the business element, it does have a chance. It is in the decision-maker's hands to see what you want to do and how you want to go about doing it.

OPEN TO PUBLIC

None

ADJOURNMENT

All business having been completed, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Michael Francis. The motion was seconded by Daniel Conkling and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.