

SOMERSET COUNTY
PLANNING BOARD
2010 ACOMPLISHMENTS &
2011 GOALS

JANUARY 18, 2011

ANNUAL REORGANIZATION MEETING

Robert Bzik, PP, AICP, Director of Planning

MISSION



“Positively influence the process of growth and change in the County so that it provides the optimum living and working environment for our residents and employers, build balanced communities, promote regional awareness and cooperation, protect the natural environment and preserve our rich history, farmland and natural beauty”

“CREATING QUALITY COMMUNITITIES TOGETHER”



ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Planning Board

Land Use
&
Master
Planning

Land
Development

Transportation

Environment
&
Utilities

Housing
&
Demographics



KEEPING ON TOP OF GOVERNOR CHRISTIE'S EMERGING STATE PLANNING POLICIES

2010 Accomplishments:

- ▶ Summarized Transition Team Reports
- ▶ Examined Red Tape Review Committee Reports
- ▶ Reviewed 2010 Executive Orders
- ▶ Evaluated various Bills affecting local, state and regional planning – including the Smart Growth Coalition's State Planning Reform Bill

2011 Goals:

- ▶ Obtain information on and respond to the Christie Administration's State Planning priorities, goals and initiatives
- ▶ Keep abreast of the restructuring of the Office Planning Advocacy and State Planning Commission
- ▶ Define relationship between the County Planning Board and the State Office of Planning Advocacy
- ▶ Monitor key legislation

PROVIDING INPUT INTO NJDEP RESTRUCTURING

2010 Accomplishments:

- ▶ Participated in WQMP Workgroup Meetings and submitted formal recommendations
- ▶ Reviewed NJDEP Transformation Plan
- ▶ Meet with new NJDEP leaders regarding permit reform
- ▶ Submitted comments on proposed Bills affecting the WQMP Process

2011 Goals:

- ▶ Participate in additional Workgroup Meetings
- ▶ Provide NJDEP with constructive feedback and recommendations for improving WQMP regulations and processes
- ▶ Submit formal review comments on other NJDEP proposals and initiatives, particularly those affecting State and Regional Planning (i.e. Proposed Habitat Rules)

SHAPING STATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING REFORM EFFORTS

2010 Accomplishments:

- ▶ Summarized various versions of S1/A3447, which were provided to municipal officials and posted on the Planning Board Website
- ▶ Coordinated the preparation and submission of formal written comments with Municipal Officials
- ▶ Coordinated several public meetings at which State Housing Reform Efforts were discussed
- ▶ Provided recommendations housing issues, policies and strategies to Marcia Karrow's Task Force which helped shape its final report to the Governor
- ▶ Updated the Senior Housing and Affordable Housing GIS Inventories

2011 Goals:

- ▶ Monitor the status of S1/A3447 and other housing reform legislation
- ▶ Continue to disseminate information and coordinate the submission of county and municipal recommendations regarding housing reform initiatives

PROMOTING THE 2010 CENSUS

2010 Accomplishments:

- ▶ Developed and implemented complete count work plan
- ▶ Hosted Census Enumerator Training Workshops
- ▶ Promoted census participation through multiple venues
- ▶ Achieved a Countywide participation rate of 79%!

2011 Goals:

- ▶ Facilitate access to 2010 Census Data via the Planning Website
- ▶ Prepare and distribute summary tables for county and local officials
- ▶ Provide a training workshop for Census data users
- ▶ Utilize 2010 Census Data in County Plan updates and decision making process

REINVENTING THE WASTEWATER PLANNING PROCESS

2010 Accomplishments:

- ▶ Worked with Municipal WMP Committees and NJDEP to arrive at “NJDEP Accepted” Proposed Sewer Service Areas
- ▶ Completed the majority of the GIS Data Development required for Mapping and Build-out
- ▶ Obtained clarification on municipal ordinance requirements
- ▶ Scheduled required public meeting – January 20, 2011

2011 Goals:

- ▶ Finalize GIS data layers
- ▶ Prepare draft and final build-analyses for non-urban municipalities and 2030 projections for urban municipalities
- ▶ Identify solutions to capacity constraints
- ▶ Complete WMP Chapters including associated maps
- ▶ Facilitate adoption of required ordinances by municipalities
- ▶ Complete Countywide draft WMP document including all tables and graphics for submission to NJDEP

ADVANCING TRANSPORTATION PLANNING INITIATIVES

2010 Accomplishments:

- ▶ Progress made on Route 22 Sustainable Corridor Implementation and development of Rt. 22 Long Term Plan
- ▶ Examined opportunities to implement Route 202 Study recommendations
- ▶ Completed Joint study of the Easton Ave. Corridor with Middlesex County
- ▶ Commenced Circulation Element update
- ▶ Ongoing support of the Raritan Valley Rail Coalition and involvement in NJTPA and other organizations

2011 Goals:

- ▶ Complete and adopt updated County Circulation Element
- ▶ Monitor New Airspace Plan
- ▶ Launch New Technical Study

ENCOURAGING REDEVELOPMENT

2010 Accomplishments:

- ▶ Released Updated Redevelopment Report
- ▶ Held successful 2010 Redevelopment Planning Workshop
- ▶ Prepared "Targeted Growth Area" GIS shape file
- ▶ Sponsored NJIT School of Architecture Graduate Studio that prepared "Regenerative Design" scenarios for the Rustic Mall redevelopment site

2011 Goals:

- ▶ Support the Somerset County Business Partnership in developing an updated County Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)
- ▶ Serve as a resource to the County Improvement Authority and Park Commission in support of major economic and recreational re-use projects including the GSA Depot in Hillsborough, NPDC in Montgomery
- ▶ Work with State leaders to establish and promote redevelopment incentives to achieve economic and community revitalization
- ▶ Promote the use of LEED redevelopment standards, low-impact design and regenerative design to achieve sustainability.

PRESERVING OPEN SPACE AND FARMLAND

2010 Accomplishments:

- ▶ Completion of GIS Preserved Land Dataset; on-going update process defined
- ▶ Significant "Right to Farm" cases addressed
- ▶ 616 additional farmland acres preserved through the County PIG Program, conducted annual monitoring and resolved violations
- ▶ Community Garden Survey conducted
- ▶ Monitored agricultural and related legislation and SADC Policies

2011 Goals:

- ▶ Implement GIS Preserved Land Dataset update process
- ▶ Administer County Farmland Preservation Program
- ▶ Enhance community access to locally grown foods
- ▶ Expand agricultural marketing efforts (update the County AG Board Webpage, build new partnerships between AG organizations, farmers and consumers and supporting farmers markets)
- ▶ Explore Bio-fuel and other compatible renewable energy opportunities
- ▶ Partner with Park Commission to develop a Scope of Work and identify resources for updating the Park, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan

HELPING THE REGIONAL CENTER GROW WISELY

2010 Accomplishments:

- ▶ **Actions taken toward SCP Endorsement**
 - Review and feedback provided to OSG on Opportunities and Constraints Analysis
 - Documentation substantiating extensive visioning process submitted
- ▶ **Marketing Plan Implemented**
- ▶ **Transportation Summit held 11-5-10**
- ▶ **Rain garden/rain barrel demonstration project in Raritan**
- ▶ **Orlando Drive Redevelopment planning underway**

2011 Goals:

- ▶ **Implement Regional Center Bike and Pedestrian Plan, Raritan Greenway Plan and Marketing Plan**
- ▶ **Continue to administer RC Challenge Grant Program**

SUPPORTING ENERGY CONSERVATION, EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

2010 Accomplishments:

- ▶ **Somerset County Energy Audit Program Completed**
 - Level 2 Audits provided for 83 municipal and school facilities
 - Most municipalities are participating in NJ Direct Install Program
- ▶ Reviewed energy related legislation, programs and State Energy Master Plan and met with Assemblyman Chivukula
- ▶ Ramped-up SCEC efforts to investigate emerging energy technologies
- ▶ SCEC conducted research on opportunities to facilitate school district participation in SEE Program
- ▶ **2011 Goals:**
- ▶ SCEC to host Energy Technology Workshop with the US Chamber of Commerce and Somerset County Business Partnership
- ▶ Complete overviews of emerging energy technologies and submit recommendations to Freeholders
- ▶ Update SCEC Website
- ▶ Pursue development of GIS-based Energy Opportunities analysis for the County

PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

2010 Accomplishments:

- ▶ Participated in shaping the new Sustainable Jersey Certification Level
- ▶ Supported municipal involvement in the Sustainable Jersey Certification Program
- ▶ Sponsored the Rutgers University, "Sustainable Raritan" Graduate Planning Studio and joined Sustainable Raritan Collaborative

2011 Goals:

- ▶ Emphasize the Principles of Sustainability while completing the update of the draft Smart Growth Strategic Plan
 - Include 2010 Census and other new information
 - Integrate the new County WMP
 - Update and incorporate County Natural and Cultural Resource Inventory
 - Address emerging planning priorities including energy, community health, economic revitalization and ecological restoration

For more information contact:

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