

**Chairman's Comments**  
**January 17, 2012 Reorganization Meeting**

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Let me once again thank all Board Members for re-electing me as Planning Chair for 2012 and congratulations to

**Ron Krilla**

**Margaret Mary Jones**

**Ken Brenn**

**Robert Marasco**

**and Michael Loftus** for your re-appoint to the Board.

I am honored to work with you and serve, what I believe to be the best County Planning Board in the state.

I would like to take this opportunity to again thank all of our Planning Board Members and our exceptional staff lead by Bob Bzik for their hard work and dedication throughout the past year

Somerset County remains one of the premier counties in the nation because of strong and consistent leadership provided by the Board of Chosen Freeholders and all its Boards and Commissions.

**In 2012 we will continue our planning efforts to ensure the County's greatness, now and in the future by:**

- **Administering the County's Land Development Review ;**
- **Providing a regional framework for growth and investment;**
- **Encouraging inter-municipal cooperation and;**
- **Promoting cooperation among other County agencies concerning land use planning; and**
- **Recognizing that land use and zoning authority rests with municipalities, we will continue to act as an advocate for our municipalities while encouraging consistency with County and State Plans.**

2011 was an exceptionally active and productive year with the Planning Board laying a strong foundation for the County in a number of areas.

Planning Director Bob Bzik will recap in more detail some of the major accomplishments and goals in the areas of:

- **Integrating state policies;**
- **Wastewater management planning;**
- **Tracking housing, demographic and economic trends;**
- **Advancing transportation initiatives;**
- **Developing an updated economic development strategy;**
- **Supporting our communities;**
- **Increasing energy conservation, efficiency and renewable energy;**  
**and**
- **Preserving open space, farmland and historic resources.**

While Bob is reporting on those areas I think it is also important to highlight some the major themes underscoring all of this work including:

- **Making government smarter and more efficient;**
- **Promoting regulatory efficiency;**
- **Aligning state, county, regional and local plans;**
- **Working together with our municipal partners;**
- **Defining priorities and improving predictability.**

Thanks again to the Board and staff for your hard work and dedication in advancing a regional planning framework for Somerset County. Also I want to extend special thanks to Dean Hughes for joining us and sharing his thoughts and observations about the way the New Jersey is responding to the Great Recession and ideas for repositioning both the state and Somerset County to succeed. I look forward to his presentation.

Finally, I want to congratulate all our **29th Annual Planning and Land Development Award Winners**. I look forward to the Award Ceremony where we will to showcase all our outstanding winners.

Let me now move on to the Business portion of the meeting. Thank you.

