



SOMERSET COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

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TO: Elected Officials, Planning Board Members, Staff and Consultant Planners, and Housing Administrators

FROM: Robert Bzik, PP, AICP, Director of Planning

DATE: April 11, 2008

SUBJECT: COAH Vacant Land Analysis Results

Please note that the NJ Council on Affordable Housing recently provided us a copy of the GIS dataset representing vacant lands in Somerset County which constitutes the results of the "Analysis of Vacant Land in New Jersey and Its Capacity to Support Future Growth", prepared by the National Center for Neighborhood and Brownfield Redevelopment at Rutgers, December 31, 2007. These vacant land layers have been added to our Map Service established by the Somerset County MIS/GIS Department in a GIS format and instructions for accessing the Map Service are enclosed. In addition, display-size maps in PDF format illustrating COAH's Vacant Lands for Northern, Central and Southern Somerset County are now available on the County Planning Board Website: www.co.somerset.nj.us/planweb/learn.htm.

While the County has not received any guidance from COAH whether they will be revising this vacant land analysis based on the use of parcel data, you are strongly encouraged to commence work on corrections and updates to GIS datasets and maps illustrating open space, preserved farms, existing land use, and other resources necessary for carrying out the vacant land adjustment procedures described in 5:94-5.2 of the proposed Third Round COAH Rules. We are also requesting that you share this information with Somerset County, since it will be very valuable to us in preparing the new County Wastewater Management Plan (WMP) and associated municipal WMP chapters. As part of the WMP process, the County Planning Board will be undertaking a build-out analysis as part of the County WMP, and will be incorporating minimum lot size based on municipal zoning as well as parcel data. We will be seeking municipal refinement of the vacant land layer that will be generated as part of the County WMP Process. Our goal is to submit the refined WMP vacant land layer developed in conjunction with our municipalities to COAH as an alternative to the above COAH vacant land analysis, in support of greater coordination between wastewater, housing and land use planning at all jurisdictional levels.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or Laurette Kratina, Supervising Planner if you have any questions or require additional information.

cc: Lucy Voorhoeve, Executive Director, NJ COAH
Lawrence Baier, Director, NJDEP, Division of Watershed Management
Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders
Somerset County Planning Board