

TO: Somerset County Municipal Wastewater Management Committees

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

DATE: January 20, 2009

RE: Wastewater Management Planning Guidance – Piedmont Area & February 18, 2009 Meeting Invitation

The County Planning Board met with Lawrence Baier, Director, NJDEP Division of Watershed Management and his staff on January 14, 2009 at which updated information on how to complete the County’s Wastewater management Plan (WMP) was provided, as well as a demonstration of the recently revised NJDEP WMP GIS Model Builder tool which will be used for estimating future sanitary sewage flows and potable water demand. At this meeting, the County described the approach and process it has been using to prepare the GIS data layers required to run the model. These are summarized in the table below:

<u>GIS DATA PROVIDED BY THE COUNTY AND MUNICIPALITIES</u>	<u>GIS DATA PROVIDED BY NJDEP</u>
1. Updated Tax Parcels	1. 2002 Land Use/Land Cover
2. Updated Zoning	2. NJDEP Environmental Constraints Analysis (T&E Habitat, National Heritage Priority Sites, Surface Water, Wetlands, Riparian Buffers)
3. Updated Preserved Lands (Federal, State, County and Local Parks, Open Space and Preserved Farms)	3. Previously Approved SSAs
4. Updated Potentially Developable (Vacant) Land ⁴	4. Draft NJDEP Modified SSAs
5. Updated Existing Parcels Served by Sanitary Sewer	5. HUC 11 and 14 Watersheds
6. Redevelopment Areas, Proposed COAH Sites & Institutional Facilities	6. Water Purveyor Service Areas
7. Parcels served by septic within SSAs	
8. Updated Sewer Infrastructure	
9. Refined Sewer Service Areas (SSAs) and Wastewater Planning Areas	

County Planners have been working one-on-one with municipal officials and staff to prepare the GIS data listed on the left side of the table. This work is in various stages of development. The County Planning Board is very grateful for the local assistance that has been provided, and appreciates your ongoing participation at various meeting with our staff. The quality and accuracy of the maps representing these features, as well as the accuracy and reliability of the Model Builder results directly depends on your active involvement. Completed maps in PDF format illustrating the data listed above will be placed on the County Planning Board Website after local review comments are incorporated. You will be notified via e-mail each time a map is placed on the County Website, and will have 5 business days to review it for any final changes. The final maps will also be incorporated into the County WMP, and will be used to run the Model. **Our goal is to finalize Maps illustrating data layers 2 through 8 listed above by the beginning of April 2009 for all municipalities.** The Model is being run by County Planners on a town-by-town basis, as the set of complete GIS data layers becomes available for each town. The results of the DEP Build-Out Model, which includes the number of new units, commercial, industrial and office square feet, and associated septic yields, sewer flows and water supply demand will be submitted to municipal WMP Committees for review and feedback as they become available.

One of the GIS maps considered most critical to the County Wastewater Management Plan by NJDEP illustrates the Refined Sewer Service Areas for your municipality. **Our target date for completing the refined Sewer Service Areas (SSAs) for all of our municipalities is May 30, 2009.** This data layer takes the longest to prepare, since interim NJDEP review and acceptance prior to using it to run the Model is required. Since most of you are in the midst of this process with us, we thought it would be helpful to note that NJDEP requires that we must follow the below criteria when preparing this GIS data layer:

- **SSA boundaries may follow the parcel boundary lines of fully developed lots. However, if a lot can be subdivided and contains environmental constraints, the environmentally constrained portion of the parcel should be excluded if it is part of an Environmentally Sensitive Area 25 or more contiguous acres in size as defined by NJDEP pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:15-5.24.**
- **SSA refinements can be based on habitat suitability determinations, a Wetlands Letter of Interpretation, or other information that demonstrates that the NJDEP's GIS ESA data is inaccurate at a particular location in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:15-5.24 (e).**
- **SSAs may also include Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) as defined above in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:15-5.24(g) to allow infill development, or to remove undulations in the sewer service area boundary as necessary to create a linear boundary that relates to recognizable geographic features, provided the NJDEP determines that the ESA is not critical to a population of endangered or threatened species, the loss of which would**

decrease the likelihood of the survival or recovery of the species in the State.

- **Under N.J.A.C. 7:15 -5.24 (h), SSAs may include areas that contain ESAs provided they are designed to accommodate center-based development and are elements of State Planning Commission endorsed plans where the NJDEP determines that the ESAs are not critical to the survival of a population of endangered or threatened species; the endorsed plan adequately addresses environmental protection in the environs and adequate wastewater management is demonstrated.**
- **Projects within previously approved SSAs that have been built or are under construction should be included within the Refined SSA.**
- **Projects located within previously approved SSAs, which have local site plan or subdivision approval or construction permits, and that have either NJPDES permits or TWA Approvals should be included within the Refined SSA in accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:15-8.1 (b).**

While working on the various local GIS datasets above, it became apparent that numerous parcels served by septic systems may be located within Sewer Service Areas. NJDEP advised the County to include an estimate of future wastewater flow associated with these parcels. In a few municipalities, this information can be derived from the GIS data and mapping prepared thus far as part of this project. However, for other municipalities, we will be contacting Municipal WMP Committees for this information.

The County Planning Board has scheduled a meeting with all of the Municipal WMP Committees in the Piedmont portion of the County to review the above guidance, timeline and process for completing the County WMP. This meeting will be held on **February 18, 2009 from 6:00 – 7:30 PM in the Freeholder Meeting Room, Third Floor, Somerset County Administration Building, 20 Grove Street, Somerville.** It is important for all communities to be represented at this meeting. Please e-mail us at planning.bd@co.somerset.nj.us to confirm your participation.

We look forward to completing a County WMP that will be endorsed by all of our municipalities.

- C: Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders and Planning Board
Somerset County Mayors and Planning Board Chairmen
Lawrence Baier, Director, NJDEP, Division of Watershed Management
Paul DeMuro, NJDEP, Division of Watershed Management
T.McCracken, SCPB
L.Kratina, SCPB