

## HUNTERDON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Minutes – January 9, 2020

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Carol Hoffmann, Phil Greiner, Page Stiger, Andy Borkin, Tom Mathews, Dana Desiderio, Gabrielle Bolarakis, Richard Dodds, Freeholder VanDoren

**ABSENT:** Freeholder Lanza

**STAFF PRESENT:** Ken Bogen, Bill Millette, Adam Bradford, Carrie Fellows  
Aaron Culton - County Counsel

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Ken Bogen read the Open Public Meetings Act notice and called the meeting to order at 8:15 AM

*"This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate notice has been provided by prominently posting and maintaining so posted throughout the year in the Office of the County Clerk, Hall of Records, Main Street, Flemington, New Jersey, a public place reserved for such announcements, and by mailing on or before December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019 to The Hunterdon Democrat, The Express Times, Courier News, The Trenton Times, Star Ledger, and TAPinto, newspapers designated by the Hunterdon County Planning Board to receive such notices. Notice has also been posted on-line in the Hunterdon County News"*

### **REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Ken Bogen requested the report of the Nominating Committee. Tom Mathews presented to the Board the slate of the 2020 officers: Carol Hoffmann-Chair, Andy Borkin-Vice Chair, and Phil Greiner- Secretary. Moved by Tom Mathews, seconded by Richard Dodds. The motion was approved.

Ken turned the meeting over to Chair Carol Hoffmann. Carol mentioned that Andy and Page were reappointed to the Board at the BOCF Reorg meeting.

### **MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 5th. MEETING:**

Motion to approve minutes, Andy Borkin, Richard Dodds seconded, Andy abstained, motion carried.

### **FREEHOLDER UPDATE:**

Carol mentioned that Freeholder VanDoren is the 2020 Freeholder Director and Freeholder Soloway is the Freeholder Deputy Director. Freeholder VanDoren and John Lanza are Planning Board members and Freeholder Holt is the Board alternate. Freeholder VanDoren discussed the Freeholder department liaison responsibilities for this year. Freeholder Lanza is the liaison to the Planning and Land Use department.

He thanked the Board for their service and staff for their continued hard work. His intent is to make the entire County be as transparent as possible to the public including all County Boards, Committees, Departments and Commissions. The County will increase their use of social media and websites to increase their presence with the public.

### **DESIGNATION OF NEWSPAPERS AND CALENDAR DATE APPROVALS:**

Richard Dodds made a motion to set the designation of HC Democrat, Star Ledger, Courier News, Express-Times, Trenton Times and & TAPinto to carry Public Notices & Advertisements. Andy Borkin seconded, motion carried. Carol Hoffmann asked for a motion to approve the 2020 Planning Board dates which includes the change of the July meeting to the 1<sup>st</sup> as well as approval of the 2020 DRC meetings dates. Andy Borkin moved, Richard Dodds seconded, motion carried.

### **STAFF UPDATES:**

#### Farmland Update:

Bob reported that he has 28 active applications. In 2019 there were 14 farms that closed for 908.1 acres. \$7 million in total, with \$6.3 million from the SADC, only \$216 thousand from Hunterdon. There were 3 re-appointments, 4-year terms until 2023. David Bond, Bob Hoffman and Dave Kyle. The Hemp legislation was passed in New Jersey, they are treating hemp as a field row crop. Any questions can be directed to Megan Muehlbauer at Rutgers Extension. The Hunters Helping the Hungry culled 800 deer for 27,500 lbs. of venison, for a total of 110 thousand meals to the food banks. We are continuing to work with Soil Conservation with farmland monitoring. The County holds 311 easements. A monthly report is now a CADB agenda item. The SADC has closed comments on special occasion events on preserved farms. 6 of 18 county have submitted responses, including Hunterdon. In February they will have recommendations to go to the legislature. In 2020 one of our big projects is to update the Farmland Preservation Plan, last done in 2008. 11 of 26 of the municipalities have Planning Incentive Grant (PIG) programs, only 7 of the 11 renewed for 2020. Researching to see if this was an intentional issue that they are drawing back funding or just missed paperwork. Work is ongoing with the SADC and the municipalities to see if what direction we need to be going for future

farmland preservation. We have 3 Right to Farm issues and 2 hearings will most likely be on the February agenda - the Beneduce Winery and Melick Orchard. There is a new Commercial Farm certification in Kingwood that could also be tentatively heard in February.

Planning Issues:

Adam reported that he continues to work on updates to the LDS (Land Development Standards), All chapters are done except 300,1500& 1600. The appendences are currently being revised. There were 53 GIS maps that he produced for the HC WMP that are now at DEP for review. Phil asked how far along is staff with the HC WMP. Ken replied that that there are 5 major tasks in total, currently 4 tasks have been completed which includes all mapping.

Open Space:

Bill reported that he has been rolling over the Grant programs to 2020 and updating the funding available. This year we start the year with \$3.6 million in the open space grant program. There are currently 26 active applications from prior years. In 2019, we closed on a 15-acre piece on Round Mountain that will give our parks crew access to Round Mountain from the northern side.

Department Head:

Carrie reported that budgets are due for all departments. Parks: The Harbinger published upcoming public programs; camp descriptions will be published later.

Cultural & Heritage:

Final grants reports for 2020 are due. The NJ Historical Commission will be focusing on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment. It will be hosting 2 programs; February 8<sup>th</sup> with Susan Wallner at 2:30pm at the Historic County Court House and another March 15 with Ann Gordon, about the history of women voting in NJ.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Executive Committee:

Carol said that there will be a brief Committee meeting after the DRC meeting to discuss potential Breakfast talk topics for the year.

DRC Committee Report: Carol said that Andy and Dana have volunteered for today's DRC meeting. Dana volunteered for the February 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Ken said that the last DRC meeting was canceled and there is one application (reconsideration) being reviewed today.

Supervisors Report: There were no questions or comments regarding the December staff activity report. Ken discussed some of the major highlights from the 2019 Annual Report that was distributed to the Board: Much progress has been made on the update to the Land Development Standards, major deliverables for the County WMP have been completed and submitted to the NJDEP, there were 2 successful Breakfast Talks, The County surpassed 34,000 acres of preserved farmland, 908 acres closed were the most since 2013. 14 farms closed most since 2010. The streamlined Open Space application process resulted in an increased interest in the Open Space program.

Highlands Plan Conformance - Ken discussed the "Public Informational Listening Session" that has been rescheduled to February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020 from 7:30-9:00AM in the Freeholder meeting room. Freeholders Holt, Carrie and Ken will reach out to Mayors and possibly attend some municipal council meetings to help stimulate interest in the County Conformance process. Carrie mentioned some of the benefits that will be available to our municipalities as a result of the County Plan Conformance process.

Transportation:

Adam reported that he was going over a list of bridges that the NJDOT had identified. There was one possible bridge in question. Adam said that the only time he is involved with phase changes is for specific NJDOT lead projects occurring within the County. Data suggests that FRIO is taking off. There is a lot more ships anticipated to be coming with the new Bayonne bridge expansion, and the possibility of opening up older freight lines to accommodate the transportation of goods.

Tom said that are a few resurfacing projects scheduled for the spring including Route 513 from Everittstown to Pittstown and Route 628 through Glen Gardner and Lebanon Township to Route 513 by Voorhees. The County complex will soon be hooked up to public water. There will be some delays on Route 78,202 & 206 due to DOT bridge work that is ongoing in Somerset County. Starting in the spring, the work on the RT16 bridge at the old Merck site will be done in 3 phases so there will always be 1 lane open for traffic. The Readington roundabout project is a Federal Project and will move slowly. This will not be a 2020 project.

Old Business/New Business:

Richard said that PENNEAST will need to obtain a 2-year extension from FERC by the end of the month else they have to start the process all over again. The case is pending in front of the Supreme Court. If the Court decides not to hear it, the Appellate Court decision stands.

Richard discussed the problem of municipalities not being alerted when a deed is filed with the County Clerk. Some deeds take a very long time to complete, such as on subdivisions and housing projects. If municipalities are accepting Green Acres funding, you are required to compile and submit a ROSI which includes all lands held for conservation and recreation purposes. The muni doesn't know if there is an existing conservation easement and who holds that easement. The ROSI will not match the easement information that the state has. Municipalities need to have this information. It would be very helpful to municipalities if the County could provide the deed information after it is filed. Most municipalities that want future Green Funding do not have the resources to provide all the ROSI information that Green Acres requires.

Andy inquired when Marc Saluk would be available again for an Economic Development update. Ken replied that he would confirm with Marc when he would be attending future Planning Board meetings and if he wasn't available to have a staff person provide a summary update.

Public Comments:

Barbara Sachau suggested that a law be enacted to make the owner aware of when there are changes in deeds. She made additional comments concerning the need for wildlife advocacy and animal protectors on the Planning Board; and further comments about hunting with lead shot, contaminating the land and the deer being given to poor people.

There was no further business to be brought before the Board. Richard made a motion to adjourn the Planning Board meeting, Page seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 9:16 AM

**NEXT MEETING DATE:** February 6, 2020 at 8:15 AM

Susan Pena for Secretary, Phil Greiner