

Minutes

The regular meeting of the Warren County Planning Board was held on July 22, 2024 in person and using Webex and conducted through electronic communications equipment to preserve the health, safety and welfare of the public conformance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, et seq. [the Open Public Meetings Acts]. Mr. Norton called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Warren County Planning Board

An announcement was read as required by the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 to 10:4-21.

Roll Call

Present: Adam Baker
William Gleba
Laurel Napolitani
Gerald Norton

Alternate Present: Terry Urfer

Also Present: Ryan P. Conklin, Asst. Planning Director
Krishna R. Jhaveri, Esq.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

MINUTES

The minutes of April 22, 2024 were approved on a motion by Ms. Napolitani, seconded by Mr. Baker. Motion carried with Mr. Gleba and Mr. Urfer abstaining.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Noted for the record. There were no individuals of the public in attendance.

CORRESPONDENCE

- NJ Planner – March/April
- Agricultural Development Board – June 20, 2024
- Correspondence Received 4/22/24 – 7/1/24

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Warren County Planning Dept. Project Report June and July 2024 – Items of discussion:

1. Development Applications

Mr. Conklin began by stating that the number of applications that are moving forward through the review process have gone down due to Land Development within the County being slow, and because the Planning Department recently implemented a more robust technical completeness review. Mr. Conklin noted that there are currently a number of active applications, and that Planning would be working closely with the applicants to give them a better understanding of what they are looking for in terms of submissions. Mr. Conklin noted that when applicants submit, everything needs to be technically complete and that applications would not be moving forward unless it has all of the information Planning is looking for. Mr. Conklin iterated the importance of ensuring technical completeness as it relates to sending the applications for review by the engineering consultants.

2. Development Review Online Applications

Mr. Conklin displayed the Development Dashboard on the screen and explained that it can be used by applicants to check the status of their application. He also noted that anyone from the public could view the dashboard if they wanted to know about recent land development applications.

Mr. Norton asked if the dashboard could be used by an applicant to review deficiencies within their application.

Mr. Conklin responded in the negative, noting that deficiencies within applications would still be relayed through formal correspondence.

6. Morris Canal

Mr. Conklin stated that he was still working with the NJDOT on a Trail Improvement Project and looking to wrap it up soon.

7. Warren Heritage Scenic Byway

Mr. Conklin stated that they would meet on July 29, 2024.

9. I-80 Rockfall Project/S-Turns/Retaining Wall

Mr. Conklin stated that Planning had been continuing to submit comments and collaborate with the NJDOT on this project.

10. I-80 Columbia Interchange

Mr. Conklin stated that there have been complaints about trucks and other traffic cutting through at the Columbia interchange, since then we've contracted to put out traffic counters to see what it actually

happening in that area of Columbia to get a better idea of how much truck traffic is there and why there seems to be a lot of traffic through Columbia.

Mr. Urfer began a brief discussion about the reopening of a portion of route 611 within the next two to three months, also how the long-term closure has impacted the increased traffic observed at the Columbia Interchange.

Mr. Conklin also noted that the actual construction at the Columbia Interchange is a large contributing factor to the increased traffic patterns.

21. Solid Waste and Recycling

Mr. Conklin stated that the Planning Department held their Paper Shredding event, noting that there were 281 deliveries.

25. Assisting Other Departments/26. GIS

Mr. Conklin stated that the Planning Department was working on Next Generation 9-1-1 grant implementation for Public Safety.

Mr. Conklin stated that the Planning Department had the Enterprise installation, allowing them to work on things like asset management, web mapping tools, and tools for staff in other departments.

27. County Planners Association/APA

Mr. Conklin stated that the Department made a visit to Westfield on June 14th, noting that Westfield has interesting, unified land use, land circulation planning.

28. Highlands Council

Mr. Conklin stated that he gave a tour to the consultants, as well as a couple of Highlands Council members, and highlighted some interesting places; the Scenic Byway - a few wineries, a few breweries - the interest of Agritourism. This is another economic development initiative that the County is trying to pursue.

Mr. Conklin also stated that the Department met with the 519 Tri-County initiative for market businesses along 519, noting that this would include Sussex County, Hunterdon County, and Warren County. Mr. Conklin stated that they are looking to do something similar in Hunterdon County with the 579 Corridor.

33. Stormwater Control Ordinances

Mr. Urfer began a brief discussion about utilizing the Highlands Council for funding Ordinances. Mr. Conklin noted that the Highlands Council is the main source of funding for planning aside from the NJTPA. He also mentioned that there may be new legislation that can help with that. Mr. Urfer asked that if the Planning Department knows of any other funding, to provide that information accordingly.

Mr. Conklin stated that Stormwater Control Ordinances were supposed to be adopted by July 18th, noting that almost all of the municipalities did submit. He noted that he would send a follow up email to any

outstanding municipalities.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

LIAISON REPORT

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- **Complete Streets Update**

Mr. Conklin displayed the Connect Warren County website and discussed the Complete Streets information pop-up held on July 21st at the street fair in Hackettstown, and at the upcoming Warren County Farmer's Fair on August 1st. He noted that these initiatives were part of the public outreach planning study.

Mr. Conklin explained that they would be looking throughout the County for Complete Streets opportunities and recommendations, along with creating guidance documents and procedures for the municipalities to potentially implement Complete Streets initiatives and Ordinances. He also noted that this project is being funded by the NJTPA through the Sub-regional Studies Program, which is focused on transportation planning and designing of streets that allow for walking, biking, deliveries, and parking.

Mr. Conklin stated that so far, there has not been a Complete Streets implementation done within the County, aside from some initiative that was taken in Greenwich. He noted that Connect Warren County would be identifying five areas for which to create conceptual designs. Mr. Conklin stated that a lot of these initiatives usually take place in urban environments, so Warren County is much like a test case as a rural small town environment.

Mr. Conklin also noted that there is a 15-question survey available to the public on the Connect Warren County website, along with an interactive web map. He displayed the map and explained that the public can use the web map to identify areas they are concerned with. Mr. Conklin also stated that these comments would be incorporated into an official planning document.

Mr. Conklin stated that Connect Warren County also met with the municipalities and asked them to engage in a municipal survey, from which there were a few responses. He also noted that a few of the municipalities have attended the County Warren County meetings, especially Belvidere, Washington Township, and Blirstown.

Mr. Conklin stated that this initiative was being done in parallel with the Local Safety Action Plan, noting that they were taking a holistic approach toward addressing traffic and transportation-related issues within the County. Mr. Conklin also stated that he hopes this will

lead to more funding, specifically NJDOT funding through the Local Safety Action Plan.

- **State Plan Update**

Mr. Conklin stated that the State Plan continues to get delayed, but that the timing has synced with affordable housing legislation. He directed the Board to view an article within the April/May NJ Planner. He noted that the article gives a good overview of the affordable housing legislation that has been adopted, and that it includes a timeline to which municipalities must adhere.

Mr. Conklin mentioned that one of the major deadlines is January 30, 2025, noting that through 2025 municipalities will need to file their binding resolutions for settlement of their fourth round. He encourages the Board members to engage with their planners and affordable housing attorneys to get a better understanding of what their obligations are going to be from a municipal standpoint.

Mr. Conklin said that the new legislation tends to increase the obligations as opposed to last round for communities like Warren County. He explained that suburban and rural fringe municipalities are going to tend to have more obligation.

Mr. Conklin stated that he would be sending an email to all of the municipalities ahead of the State Plan being released, allowing them access to tools such as web maps to take a look at the State Planning areas and identify potential conflicts of existing land uses. Mr. Conklin provided several examples.

- **Local Safety Action Plan Update**

Mr. Conklin stated that it is a longer-term project, meaning that the meetings and milestones are fewer and further between. He noted that the Planning Department is ancillary to this project which is being managed by the NJTPA.

- **GIS Update**

Mr. Conklin stated that Esri Enterprise was now implemented, which will be used to build a huge geodatabase that allows us to build custom web mapping applications and integrations with our processes internally, as well as data collection and web mapping applications for public use. He noted that initially, the Planning Department would begin building their asset management program, and then they would begin working on a Road Incident Reporter to create work orders for Roads & Bridges.

Mr. Conklin also mentioned that the Department has begun working on address updates for the Next Gen 9-1-1 project, noting that a consultant was contracted to work on a data set that would be integrated into our ArcGIS system and that it needs to be completed by June of 2025.

- **Land Development Update**

Mr. Conklin stated that the Planning Department has its first two complete applications that will go to the consultant, and hopefully the DRC (Development Review Committee). Mr. Conklin stated that the last time the DRC met was in June, noting that things have been going well in getting applications to completion, as well as in streamlining the development process.

OTHER BUSINESS

During this portion of the meeting, Mr. Conklin referenced the April/May NJ Planner, particularly an article regarding Corporate Business Tax. He explained that while Corporate Business Tax is typically used for Open Space Preservation, but because a lot of open space has already been identified, it will be utilized for park capital improvements.

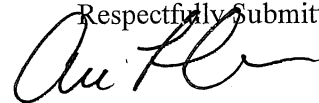
PUBLIC COMMENTS

Noted for the record. There were no individuals of the public in attendance.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:41 p.m. on a motion by Mr. Urfer, seconded by Mr. Baker. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Andrea Flohn, Recording Secretary