



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF SMART GROWTH
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JON S. CORZINE
Governor

JOSEPH V. DORIA, JR.
Commissioner

BENJAMIN L. SPINELLI
Executive Director

June 9, 2008

The Honorable Bernard O'Brien
Mayor, Township of Holland
Town Hall
61 Church Road
Milford, NJ 08848

**Re: Holland Township Petition for Initial Plan Endorsement
Memorandum of Understanding**

Dear Mayor O'Brien:

Thank you for your continued participation and dedication to the Initial Plan Endorsement process. We would like to commend you for recent actions taken that will positively affect the growth and development of your community. Specifically your actions to foster Residential Clusters, Design & Performance Standards (Vegetation and Landscaping & Fish and Wildlife), Riparian Buffer Conservation, Environmental Impact Assessments as well as your Farmland Retention Plan are positive steps toward receiving Initial Plan Endorsement. The Office of Smart Growth (OSG) and the state agencies would like to continue working with your community to achieve Initial Plan Endorsement from the State Planning Commission through an agreed-upon extension of time and Action Plan.

Enclosed please find a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Action Plan. The MOU, as authorized by the State Planning Commission, and upon execution by the Township governing body, allows for an extension of the time periods contemplated by the State Planning Rules, by the Township's commitment to work toward Initial Plan Endorsement through an agreed-upon Action Plan.

The Action Plan includes required tasks that the Office of Smart Growth and our state agency partners need in order to make a recommendation of consistency with the State Plan to the State Planning Commission. The Action Plan reflects items that have been discussed in our consistency review. The critical Action Plan item is the Center boundary or boundaries. The Action Plan establishes timelines for completion and evaluation of the identified tasks. Please note that the extension is contingent upon the Township's compliance with the Action Plan, MOU and the Township's good faith efforts to progress toward achieving Initial Plan Endorsement.



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To assist Holland Township to make an informed, insightful decision regarding the Center, the Office Smart Growth would like to conduct a public meeting where the benefits of the Center concept are fully explored. The Highlands Council will be invited to the session to serve as a resource.

In order to take advantage of this extension, I request that the Township authorize the enclosed MOU and Action Plan by resolution at a public meeting of the governing body, within 60 days of receipt of this letter, by July 31, 2008.

In addition to the Action Plan enclosed you will find a draft Plan Implementation Agreement that will need to be discussed and finalized before the Initial Plan Endorsement process is completed. As you are also aware, the Township needs to address Plan Conformance with the Highlands Regional Master Plan for the portion of the township that is in the Highlands Preservation Area. I suggest that you reach out to the Highlands Council to discuss their Initial Assessment Grant.

Finally, as we have also discussed, OSG is currently working to revise and strengthen the Plan Endorsement process. The rule will be published shortly in the New Jersey Register. Since Holland Township has already submitted a petition for Initial Plan Endorsement, once the new process is in place, you will have the option of either completing Initial Plan Endorsement or participating in the new Plan Endorsement process.

Thank you again for your continued participation in the Initial Plan Endorsement process. I would like to assure you that this process will produce a meaningful plan for your community. Please feel free to contact me or Barry Ableman, Principal Planner for Hunterdon County (e-mail: bableman@dca.state.nj.us or telephone: 609-292-3228) with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Benjamin L. Spinelli
Executive Director

BS:ba
Enclosures

c: Catherine M. Miller, Municipal Clerk
Peter Craig, Planning Board Chair, Holland Township
Elizabeth C. McKenzie, P.P., P.A.
G. Sue Dziamara, AICP/PP, Planning Director, Hunterdon County
Eileen Swan, Executive Director, Highlands Council
Karl Hartkopf, PP/AICP, Director of Planning, OSG
Barry Ableman, Principal Planner, OSG
State agency representatives *via email*