MERCER COUNTY PLANNING BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING

Most up to date meeting link can be found on County Planning Department Site: http://www.mercercounty.org/departments/planning/planning-board

In order to participate by phone, use one of the following phone numbers: US: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 436 2866 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 669 900 6833 or +1 253 215 8782

Webinar ID: 880 5029 9996

December 13, 2023 9:00 AM

PRESENT:

Michael Shine, Chairman

William S. Agress, Vice-Chair

Kristin L. McLaughlin, County Commissioner

Samuel Rubino

Jason Mildenberg on behalf of Basit Muzaffar, County Engineer

Leslie R. Floyd for Brian Hughes, County Executive

ALSO PRESENT:

Robert Ridolfi, Planning Board Counsel

Matthew Zochowski, Planning Board Secretary

Chairman Shine called the meeting of the Mercer County Planning Board to order at 9:01 AM.

I. STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Mr. Zochowski read the statement of adequate notice. Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, notice of this meeting was sent to the Trenton Times on November 15th, 2023 and was published in the Trenton Times on November 18th, 2023

II. ATTENDENCE ROLL CALL

All members were present for November Roll Call except for Basit Muzaffar. Jason Mildenberg, Assistant County Engineer was present on behalf of County Engineer Basit Muzaffar.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Shine announced that minutes have been distributed from the November 8th, 2023 meeting and asked if there were any comments. There were no comments. Vice-Chair Agress made a motion to approve the November 2023 Planning Board minutes which was seconded by Samuel Rubino. All members voted in favor.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Shine asked if there were any public comments. There were no questions or comments.

V. <u>OLD BUSINESS</u>

There was no new business to carry over from previous months.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Mercer County Complete Streets Summit Award Presentation

Mr. Zochowski made a short presentation discussing Mercer County's recent award received at the November 2023 Complete Streets Summit. The award was presented to Mercer County on behalf of Bicycle Plan Implementation. The summit brings together planners, engineers, public officials and others for peer discussions, different educational sessions and to generally to talk about complete streets. As part of the summit, NJDOT awarded Mercer County an Excellence Award for our County Bicycle Master Plan Implementation.

Mr. Zochowski thanked County staff involved and thanked the Planning Board for adopting the 2020 bicycle plan which led into the work the County has been doing. Since the adoption of this plan, the Planning Department has been working with engineering on bicycle lane projects, new crosswalks and ADA ramps, flashing beacons and other improvements. It is also with this board's help that the County has been requiring improvements as part of the County's land development process.

An award video that was made for the ceremony was shown to the Board and attendees.

New County Land Development Standards-Volume II Presentation:

At the last Planning Board meeting, Mr. Zochowski gave a presentation regarding the new Land Development Standards and Ordinance that staff were preparing. Mr. Zochowski gave an overview of Volume II at this meeting. Volume II is a large document approaching 100 pages and can become very technical so for the purposes of this presentation, only highlights were presented in addition to an overview of each chapter.

Mr. Zochowski proceeded with a presentation outlining every chapter to discuss the main contents of the Volume II Ordinance. Volume II is broken down into 13 chapters.

The chapters are as follows:

- 1. INTRODUCTION
- 2. REOUIRED SUBMISSION PLAN SHEETS & DETAILS
- 3. RIGHT-OF-WAY AND EASEMENTS
- 4. CONTROL OF ACCESS TO COUNTY ROADS AND ACCESS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS
- 5. SUBDIVISION AND SITE PLAN DESIGN STANDARDS
- 6. COUNTY ROAD DESIGN STANDARDS
- 7. TRAFFIC STUDIES AND ANALYSIS
- 8. TRAFFIC SIGNAL DESIGN STANDARDS
- 9. STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
- 10. EXISTING COUNTY BRIDGES AND CULVERTS TO BE WIDENED
- 11. LANDSCAPING ALONG COUNTY ROADS
- 12. AS-BUILT PLANS
- 13. SMALL WIRELESS FACILITIES, WIRES & CONDUIT IN COUNTY ROW

Mr. Zochowski reiterated that despite the length of the volume, most engineering standards refer to State or Federal requirements that will receive periodic updates. Our requirements will be adopted by reference and thus when State and Federal Standards are updates, our standards will also receive an update. References like MUTCD, AASHTO, NJDOT Road Design Manual, NJAC 7:8 and more.

With new ordinance, the County will only accept 24x36 paper plan sets. This is due to long term storage considerations and costs of maintaining permanent files.

Driveway Spacing or Access Point Spacing would be codified and referenced to the County Mobility Plan. Access levels have been created for every road as part of the 2010 Mobility Master Plan adoption. Five major access levels would determine spacing distances between driveways.

Cross access will have a much stronger role in the new ordinance. Mr. Zochowski mentioned that with the County's recently successful lawsuit, the County's legal authority has been upheld, and the County feels much more comfortable with being explicit in its requirements. This chapter was written to codify those requirements and to stay consistent for all future applicants. So the County is not surprising applicant or having to explain cross access every time. The intent is that developers will come with these items already considered in their applications.

Mr. Zochowski presented the board with an example cross access hypothetical and explained the many caveats to the cross access requirement. Incompatible uses and desire to keep a separation of vehicle types would allow for waivers as would geographic barriers such as streams, wetlands or steep elevation differences between properties. Most of these considerations would be at the discretion of the County Engineer.

Chapter 5 and 6 go hand in hand. Chapter 5 deals with subdivision and site plan standards as they relate to site development. Things like driveway design, on-street parking, turning lanes and acceleration/ deceleration lanes and things like that.

Chapter 6 on the other hand deals with things strictly within the County right-of-way and are essentially the County's road design standards. Pavement cross sections and slopes, lane widths and joint details, etc. Chapter 7 deals with traffic studies and what the County is looking for in reports for reviews and then chapter 8 deals with traffic signal designs and specifications.

Chapter 9 deals with stormwater management and our requirements. Much of this is tied to NJAC 7:8 which regulates stormwater across the state and has been updated by NJDEP a couple times since its original adoption. NJAC 7:8 is one of the toughest statewide standards in the Country and by tying the Country's standards to the State, we can stay current when the statewide standards are updated.

Chapter 10 deals with existing County bridges and culverts to be widened.

Chapter 11 greatly expands on the County's landscaping requirements and Mr. Zochowski explained the new regulations. Spacing standards have been set for trees and a list of recommended trees has been created. These trees are separated into small, medium and large trees and all have different requirements. Trees and landscaping can be placed in the County right-of-way pending the preparation of an Indemnification Agreement.

Mr. Zochowski mentioned that in the past, trees and streetscaping items were prohibited by County for fear of maintenance and liability. In Camden County, these items are allowed pending an Indemnification Agreement and Mercer County adopted a similar template that indemnifies the County and holds applicants to maintenance responsibilities in perpetuity. This will allow applicants to make more improvements, allow the municipalities to ask for greater streetscaping improvements and keep the County indemnified and free from maintenance.

Chapter 12 deals with as-built plans and will allow County to keep track of improvements to County facilities and Chapter 13 deals with Utility Poles and Small Wireless Facilities.

VII. <u>CORRESPONDENCE</u>

No new correspondence was received.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Shine asked for the motion to adjourn the meeting. Vice-Chair Agress made the motion and Commissioner McLaughlin seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at with the following vote:

Y	Michael Shine	Y	Commissioner McLaughlin
Y	William S. Agress	Y	Jason Mildenberg- behalf of Basit Muzaffar
Y	Samuel Frisby	Y	Leslie R. Floyd
Y	Dallas Barr		

Respectfully Submitted,

Matthew Zochowski, Planning Board Secretary