



State of New Jersey

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Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: John A. Maher, Chief Counsel 

SUBJECT: Procedure for Considering Proposals to Amend the Highlands Regional Master Plan

DATE: July 13, 2017

With respect to the Procedure for Considering Proposals to Amend the Highlands Regional Master Plan (Procedure), Executive Director Nordstrom has asked me to briefly summarize for you what we have done so far and where we go from here.

What have we done so far?

- On January 19, 2017, the Council adopted a resolution to use the Procedure going forward to finalize the MPRR and to consider any proposals to amend the RMP arising out of the MPRR, and to adopt a final version of the Procedure as an amendment to the RMP. A copy of the 1/19/17 resolution is attached.
- At the January 19 meeting, the Council heard comments on the draft Procedure from members of the public. The RMP Amendment Committee considered those comments and recommended two revisions to the draft Procedure which are incorporated in the current draft and which are shown in the track changes version in your meeting material. A copy of the Committee's 2/6/17 memorandum recommending these changes is attached.
- On July 12, the Committee met in a public session to consider the draft Resolution. The Committee voted to recommend that the Council authorize Council staff to conduct the "five, plus one" hearings required before the Procedure can be adopted by the Council as part of the RMP.

Where do we go from here?

- At its July 20 meeting, the Council will be voting on a resolution to authorize Council staff to conduct the “five, plus one” hearings. **The Council’s vote does not adopt the Procedure, but simply authorizes public hearings so members of the public can be heard.** The Procedure will come back before the Council, after the public hearings, for final adoption.
- Staff anticipates that it will conduct the public hearings in September. One hearing will be in Trenton, the others will be in various locations in the Highlands Region.
- After the hearings, staff will prepare a Response to Comments document for the RMP Amendment Committee, which will review the comments, make suggestions for any revisions, and recommend adoption of the final Procedure.
- The Council will vote to adopt the final Procedure as part of the RMP.
- It is my opinion, which I shared with the RMP Amendment Committee, that the Procedure must be adopted as part of the RMP **before** the Council begins to consider any proposed amendments to the RMP that may arise out of the final MPRR.

If any members of the Council have any questions concerning the Procedure or the Resolution, I will be happy to address them at the 3:00pm sub-quorum meeting or at the Council meeting.

Attachments