



State of New Jersey

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Clinton Township Advances Planning Goals with Highlands Petition Approval

CHESTER, N.J. – At its June meeting, the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council (Highlands Council) approved a Petition for Plan Conformance from Clinton Township in Hunterdon County. The Highlands Plan Conformance process provides a framework for municipalities to bring local regulatory and planning documents into alignment with the land use and resource protection requirements of the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act and the Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP).

Clinton Township's Petition covers the entire municipality, including lands in both the Highlands Preservation Area and the Highlands Planning Area, and authorizes funding to support activities related to Plan Conformance including sustainable economic development planning among others.

“We were particularly pleased to be able to support economic development planning for Clinton Township,” explains Highlands Council Chairman Jim Rilee. “The Township is large and diverse with a great deal of land already preserved around the Round Valley area and elsewhere in the municipality. They are eager to find ways they can continue to grow, and at the same time, like many towns in the Highlands Region and throughout the state, they are looking at how they can address affordable housing requirements. We are happy to help advance work they have already begun in these areas.”

In recent years, Clinton Township has initiated development projects around the New Jersey Transit Raritan Valley Line train stop in the Annandale section of the town. Additional funding will be made available through Plan Conformance to evaluate the potential of this area to serve as a possible Highlands Center Designation.

“A Highlands Center Designation triggers a planning process that is municipally driven and focuses on specific area of a municipality where development and redevelopment make the most sense,” explains Highlands Council Executive Director Margaret Nordstrom. “The Annandale section of Clinton Township has exceptional access to transit options, existing infrastructure and some other features that may make it an ideal candidate for such a designation. This is another way of addressing economic growth for the town.”

Additional funding will support planning activities related to agricultural retention and farmland preservation, stream corridor protection and restoration, stormwater management and wastewater management. All funding is reimbursement based and contingent upon an approved scope of work. Clinton Township is the 49th municipality to have a Plan Conformance Petition approved by the Highlands Council.

Additional details about Clinton Township’s approve Petition including Highlands Council recommendations and specific funding allocations related to Plan Conformance implementation are available in the “Final Consistency Review & Recommendations Report” and the “Highlands Implementation Plan & Schedule,” which can be found along with all other Clinton Township Petition materials on the Clinton Township page of the Highlands Council website: www.nj.gov/njhighlands/planconformance/clinton_twp.html.

Actions taken by the Council at this meeting will take effect following the Governor’s review and consideration of the meeting minutes, up to 10 business days from receipt of the minutes. Materials related to this meeting including resolutions, presentations, audio and minutes will be posted at: www.nj.gov/njhighlands/about/calend/index.html (click on June 18 meeting).

The Highlands Council is a regional planning agency, established in 2004 with the passing of the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act and charged with implementation of the Act. More information is available at www.nj.gov/njhighlands.

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