

STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
 NEW JERSEY SPORTS &  
 EXPOSITION AUTHORITY

IN THE MATTER OF:

SP-755 MASTER PLAN UPDATE  
 HACKENSACK MEADOWLANDS DISTRICT

PUBLIC HEARING  
 TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2019  
 One DeKorte Park Plaza  
 Lyndhurst, New Jersey

COMMENCING AT 6:00 PM

BEFORE:

SARA SUNDELL, Director of Land Use  
 Management and Chief Engineer

SHARON MASCARO, Deputy Director of  
 Land Use Management and Deputy Chief  
 Engineer

MIA PETROU, Principal Planner

CHERYL REZENDES, Principal Planner

ALSO PRESENT:

ADAM LEVY, ESQ.,  
 Vice President of Legal and  
 Regulatory Affairs

STENOGRAPHICALLY REPORTED BY:

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August 5, 2019 and ends on Monday, September 16,  
 2019 is being provided by the NJSEA to receive  
 comments from the public on the Draft Master Plan  
 update.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A.5:10A-7(b), the  
 NJSEA introduced the Draft Master Plan Update on  
 August 5th, 2019. In addition to viewing at NJSEA  
 offices, the draft plan and public notice of this  
 hearing has been made available for download on the  
 NJSEA website, and was hand-delivered to the clerk  
 of each constituent District municipality.

Notice of this public hearing  
 appeared in the August 5th 2019 edition of the New  
 Jersey Register. Public notices were also  
 published in the Record, the Jersey Journal, and  
 the Star Ledger newspapers.

At this time, NJSEA staff will be  
 providing a brief presentation on the proposed  
 draft master plan update. At the conclusion of the  
 presentation, we will open the floor to receive  
 public comment. If you have not already done so,  
 please sign in at the table located just outside of  
 the auditorium if you'd like to make a comment, and  
 we will work down the list at that time.

MIA PETROU: Good evening everybody.

SEPTEMBER 10, 2019 6:00 PM

MS. SARA SUNDELL: Good evening  
 everyone. My name is Sara Sundell. I'm the  
 Director of Land Use Management and the Chief  
 Engineer of New Jersey Sports and Exposition  
 Authority. Seated with me this evening are Adam  
 Levy, Vice President of Legal and Regulatory  
 Affairs; Sharon Mascaro, Deputy Chief Engineer and  
 Deputy Director of Land Use Management; Mia Petrou,  
 Principal Planner; and Cheryl Rezendes, Principal  
 Planner.

The NJSEA is the Authority of the  
 State of New Jersey responsible for the regional  
 planing and zoning of the Hackensack Meadowlands  
 District, a 30.3-square mile area encompassing  
 portions of 14 municipalities in two counties,  
 including Carlstadt, East Rutherford, Little Ferry,  
 Lyndhurst, Moonachie, North Arlington, Ridgefield,  
 Rutherford, South Hackensack, and Teterboro in  
 Bergen County; and Jersey City, Kearny, North  
 Bergen, and Secaucus in Hudson County.

We are here today to obtain comment  
 on the proposed "Draft Hackensack Meadowlands  
 District Master Plan update 2020." A six-week  
 public comment period which started on Monday,

I am Mia Petrou. I'm principal planner of Land Use  
 Division of the NJSEA. I will be joined this  
 evening at various times by my colleagues, Sharon  
 Mascaro, Deputy Director of Land Use, Deputy Chief  
 Engineer and Cheryl Rezendes, Principal Planner.

I'm going to get right into it. We  
 have a lot of ground to cover.

The New Jersey Sports and Exposition  
 Authority, more commonly associated with managing  
 sports and entertainment facilities in the State is  
 also responsible for the planning and zoning of the  
 30-square-mile Hackensack Meadowlands District,  
 consisting of parts of 14 towns in two Counties, as  
 you heard Sara mention in the opening statement.  
 These land management responsibilities were  
 assigned to the NJSEA upon its merger with the New  
 Jersey Meadowlands Commission in 2015 pursuant to  
 the Hackensack Meadowlands Agency Consolidation  
 Act, where the NJSEA absorbed the operations of the  
 NJMC.

The mandates for the stewardship of  
 the Hackensack Meadowlands District, originally  
 established in 1968, remain unchanged by the  
 merger, and the NJSEA is therefore charged with  
 three main responsibilities to protect the

1 environment, to promote economic development, and  
2 to provide for the solid waste needs of the region.

3 The Consolidation Act also requires  
4 the adoption of a new master plan for the  
5 Meadowlands District within five years of the  
6 merger date, by February 5, 2020. This master plan  
7 does not apply to the Meadowlands Sports Complex  
8 property per the Act, as it is State-owned property  
9 that is not subject to District zoning regulations.  
10 However, the plan recognizes that development on  
11 the Sports Complex site must be taken into  
12 consideration as an influence on surrounding areas.

13 The Master Plan itself serves as a  
14 policy guide by establishing a vision for the  
15 future of the Meadowlands District and crafts a  
16 pathway for realizing this vision through a  
17 recommended course of actions, to further our  
18 founding mandates.

19 The year 2020 will mark the 50th  
20 anniversary of the original master plan for the  
21 Meadowlands District, which is the 1970  
22 Comprehensive Land Use Plan. We have copies of our  
23 master plan here on the table if you want to take a  
24 look at them later.

25 This plan envisioned development of

1 the Meadowlands within large specially planned  
2 areas, which, in many cases were located primarily  
3 on wetlands.

4 Over the years, increasing awareness  
5 and appreciation of wetlands and the valuable  
6 benefits they provide, not only for fish and  
7 wildlife, but for people too, resulted in a  
8 landmark change to the vision for the future of the  
9 Meadowlands.

10 This new vision was set forth in the  
11 2004 plan NJMC Master Plan, which was the first new  
12 master plan adopted for the District in more than  
13 30 years. The 2004 plan eliminated Specially  
14 Planned area designations, and instead targeted  
15 remaining wetlands in the District for  
16 preservation. The plan also provided for additional  
17 development potential on upland areas, particularly  
18 through redevelopment. Although the 2004 master  
19 plan had established a 25 to 30 year vision, the  
20 Consolidation Act requirements prompted a review of  
21 the 2004 plan. The NJSEA's Land Use Management  
22 staff are responsible for the day-to-day land  
23 management activities including zoning reviews,  
24 occupancy certifications, and the preparation of  
25 zoning regulations and redevelopment plans, worked

1 in cooperation with other divisions of the NJSEA,  
2 including our Executive, Natural resources, Solid  
3 Waste and finance divisions with support from the  
4 Rutgers Meadowlands Environmental Research  
5 Institute, the Meadowlands Conservation Trust, and  
6 our demographics consultant 4Ward Planning, to  
7 prepare the plan we are presenting and receiving  
8 comment on tonight.

9 During staff research, it became  
10 increasingly apparent that the principles of the  
11 2004 Master Plan are, for the most part, still  
12 valid, and that's its implementation has been  
13 largely effective. However, we recognized that  
14 updates certainly need to occur to address current  
15 issues and challenges facing the District, and that  
16 more in-depth studies of certain sectors are  
17 required that, for timing and resource reasons, are  
18 not included in this draft; issues such as  
19 flooding, transportation, housing, open space and  
20 the environment that require strategic planning.

21 In many cases, as you'll hear  
22 planning efforts are already underway to address  
23 these important concerns. But in order to plan for  
24 the future, we first had to evaluate where we've  
25 been.

1 The first six chapters of the draft  
2 plan, shown on the slide before you, contain the  
3 research and evaluation that went into the 2004  
4 Master Plan relating to current conditions in the  
5 District.

6 The final three chapters contain the  
7 master plan update, which provides a policy  
8 perspective for the District for the next ten  
9 years, building on the 2004 plan.

10 As part of the update, a new chapter  
11 on sustainability and resiliency is proposed and  
12 you will hear more about that later.

13 We start with the goals and  
14 objectives of the draft plan, which establish the  
15 principals on which the plan is based, expanding  
16 upon those of the 2004 Plan. They include  
17 safeguarding and restoring the district's natural  
18 and historic resources; promoting a suitable array  
19 of land uses that promote the public health, safety  
20 and general welfare while supporting the  
21 Meadowlands economy, accommodating regional housing  
22 needs in suitable locations, promoting an effective  
23 transportation network, and increasing resiliency  
24 and promoting the use of sustainable energy in the  
25 District. One of the most common challenges we

1 face here in the District is balancing these  
2 seemingly competing objectives.

3 In terms of Land use in the  
4 District, the map before you portrays the colorized  
5 patchwork of existing land uses on a  
6 parcel-by-parcel basis. The Hackensack River  
7 bisects the District in the middle. And on either  
8 side the green colors represent our natural areas,  
9 composing approximately 40 percent on the  
10 District's land area, the largest presence in the  
11 district.

12 The largest active land use is our  
13 transportation category in dark grey on the map,  
14 representing twenty percent of the District Land  
15 area, which is indicative of the extensive  
16 transportation network that traverses the District,  
17 and it is followed by industrial uses in light  
18 grey, which are established in the District due in  
19 large part to its transportation network.

20 The plan update classifies  
21 properties as natural areas, developed areas, and  
22 other areas, which prompted the creation of a new  
23 category for the Meadowlands Sports Complex site,  
24 formerly designated as Recreational Land, since the  
25 amount of impervious surfaces it contains, did not

1 fit into a natural area classification. This  
2 designation excludes Walden Swamp, which remains  
3 classified as a Wetland land use.

4 This plan also designates a new  
5 transitional land category, shown in orange, to  
6 account for sites under development that do not  
7 currently have an active land use. Transitional  
8 lands constitute almost 750 acres of the District,  
9 indicating a strong Meadowlands economy.

10 The plan reviews Meadowlands market  
11 trends and analyzes the 2004 Plan's build-out  
12 estimates over a 25-year time frame in relation to  
13 development that's actually occurred through today  
14 with approximately 10 years remaining on that  
15 build-out estimate.

16 This build-out analysis includes  
17 only new buildings and building footprint  
18 expansions that have occurred since 2004 and have  
19 received occupancy certification. It does not  
20 include buildings currently under construction.

21 Almost 4,000 housing units have been  
22 developed in the District to date, surpassing the  
23 2004 estimates, largely due to NJSEA Affordable  
24 Housing policies that have facilitated housing  
25 construction in the District.

1 About 1.2 million square feet of new  
2 commercial development has also occurred primarily  
3 within the two NJSEA redevelopment areas, including  
4 Teterboro Landing and the Harrison Avenue Retail  
5 Center in Kearny. American Dream development is  
6 not included in this estimate.

7 The office market has remained  
8 stagnant, which is not an issue isolated to the  
9 Meadowlands District. The total estimate office  
10 development includes approximately 4 million square  
11 feet of development approved under Allied specially  
12 planned area approvals at Secaucus Junction dating  
13 back to the 1990s, which has not materialized to  
14 date. The vacancy rate for office in the District,  
15 approximately 18 percent in 2018, has actually been  
16 declining in recent years. However, this is  
17 primarily due to less availability as office space  
18 is being demolished to make way for other uses,  
19 which in the district, is largely industrial  
20 development.

21 Industrial development does continue  
22 to be the predominant land use presence in the  
23 District, benefitting from proximity to New York  
24 City and surrounding regions. Approximately 4.7  
25 million square feet of new industrial development

1 has been occupied in the district since 2004, not  
2 including mezzanines or other investment such as  
3 raising the roof of an existing building. Another  
4 5.5 million square feet of new industrial  
5 development is currently under review by this  
6 office primarily within redevelopment areas.  
7 Therefore, we can expect to make more progress on  
8 our development goals in the next ten years.

9 Finally, hotel development has  
10 resulted in 436 new hotel rooms since 2004, with  
11 more under development, particularly in Secaucus  
12 due to its proximity to New York City and along  
13 Paterson Plank Road in Carlstadt and East  
14 Rutherford in anticipation of the American Dream  
15 opening.

16 MS. SHARON MASCARO: Since the  
17 adoption of the 2004 Master Plan, the NJSEA has  
18 taken a more active role in affordable housing  
19 within the district.

20 In 2007, the courts affirmed that  
21 the NJMC, as predecessor to the NJSEA, had greater  
22 responsibility to plan and zone for affordable  
23 housing. To that end, in 2008, Interim Policies  
24 governing affordable housing development in the  
25 District were created by this agency and have been

1 utilized to determine the suitability of specific  
2 properties for housing, so as not to lose  
3 opportunities for affordable housing.

4 These policies include a 20 percent  
5 affordable set-aside for new residential projects,  
6 based on the requirements of the 2008 amendments to  
7 the Fair Housing Act, commonly known as A500. The  
8 Interim Policies will continue to remain in effect  
9 until legislation or new regulations are enacted.

10 The draft master plan also provides a  
11 summary of the housing plans prepared by our  
12 constituent municipalities' including their current  
13 obligations and their plans/strategies to implement  
14 affordable housing development sites located within  
15 the district that are referred to in the municipal  
16 plans.

17 MS. PETROU: Meanwhile there are  
18 several environmental accomplishments achieved  
19 since 2004. In 2004, the district had  
20 approximately 2,500 acres of wetland sites  
21 preserved, restored, or within mitigation banks.

22 Since that time, 1,050 acres of  
23 wetlands have been gained, within 44 total sites as  
24 shown on the map. This represents an increase of  
25 more than 40 percent in the last 15 years alone and

1 is one of the largest successes of the 2004 plan.

2 A major player in these  
3 accomplishments has been the Meadowlands  
4 Conservation Trust, established in 1999. The  
5 hydrology of the District is not limited to wetland  
6 areas. Approximately three quarters of the  
7 district is located within a FEMA-designated  
8 special flood hazard area, more commonly known as  
9 the 100 year floodplain, which are the areas shown  
10 in blue on the map. Therefore flooding, as many of  
11 you know is one of the largest issues we face in  
12 the district.

13 Floodplain management is one of the  
14 core functions of the NJSEA. In addition to the  
15 preparation of a floodplain management plan, the  
16 NJSEA administers regulations for floodplain  
17 development, just updated this past August. The  
18 NJSEA is currently working on an updated floodplain  
19 management plan, scheduled to be adopted in 2021.

20 The NJSEA also participates in  
21 FEMA's community rating system. Because of NJSEA's  
22 floodplain management activities, property owner  
23 within the district currently receive a 15 percent  
24 discount on their flood insurance premiums.

25 These activities include inspecting

1 the functionality of all 29 tide gates and pump  
2 stations and 15 major drainage ditch systems in the  
3 Meadowlands District on an annual basis, in  
4 association with municipal and county public works  
5 divisions.

6 We also work with MERI to actively  
7 monitor water levels along waterways in the  
8 District and issue flood warning alerts so that  
9 emergency management personnel and residents in the  
10 District are prepared to address imminent flooding  
11 events.

12 In addition to structural measures,  
13 the NJSEA along with the Meadowlands Conservation  
14 Trust, actively pursue opportunities to fund the  
15 acquisition, restoration and maintenance of  
16 wetlands in the District. According to the USEPA,  
17 an acre of wetland can store between one and 1.5  
18 million gallons of floodwater, which reinforces the  
19 value of our natural areas for all, not only for  
20 wildlife.

21 Speaking of wildlife, the health of  
22 the District's ecosystem has been steadily  
23 improving over the years. Since the early 1990s,  
24 sampling of the District's waterways has indicated  
25 significant improvements in water quality. The

1 level of dissolved oxygen in the water has been  
2 steadily increasing and the presence of fecal  
3 coliforms has decrease by half. These improvements  
4 in water quality have supported increased diversity  
5 of species in the District, including several  
6 threatened and endangered species, such as the bald  
7 eagle, and the diamondback terrapin, with the  
8 photos provided by M.E. Raine.

9 This increase in species diversity  
10 is supported by improvements at the bottom of the  
11 food chain due to better water quality. These  
12 charts show on the left the diversity of benthic  
13 organisms, which are those that live in the mud  
14 layer at the bottom of the District's waterways and  
15 wetlands and, on the right, fish.

16 These charts evidence a significant  
17 decrease in species that proliferate in more  
18 polluted environments on the benthic chart shown in  
19 red and orange, and on the fish chart, shown in  
20 black with more recent samples showing organisms  
21 typical of balanced and less disturbed  
22 environments.

23 The topic of clean and renewable  
24 energy is currently at the forefront of the  
25 planning concerns. Supported by NJSEA Green

1 Building Regulations implemented in 2007 that  
 2 incentivize sustainable development in the  
 3 District, as well as the agency's 2008 Energy  
 4 Master Plan, more than 50 megawatts of solar energy  
 5 installations have been approved and over 42  
 6 megawatts installed through June 2019. This is  
 7 more than double the NJSEA's 2008 goal of 20  
 8 megawatts by 2020. The collection of solar energy  
 9 has become a more widespread use for portions of  
 10 closed landfills, utilizing the top and /or south  
 11 facing slope areas and allowing for wildlife  
 12 habitat on the remainder. In 2012, the largest  
 13 photovoltaic system in the District, totaling 3,000  
 14 kilowatts was installed on the NJSEA's 1A Landfill  
 15 as you can see on the picture here on the other  
 16 side. (Indicating)

17 Regarding our solid waste mandate,  
 18 the Hackensack Meadowlands District is the State's  
 19 22nd Solid Waste Management District in addition to  
 20 each of the State's 21 counties, and operates  
 21 pursuant to a separate Solid Waste Management Plan.

22 The proliferation of unregulated  
 23 dumping and landfills in the region was the main  
 24 impetus for the creation of the Hackensack  
 25 Meadowlands District in 1968, as a public health

1 mandate to provide for appropriate solid waste  
 2 facilities. At the time the District was created,  
 3 5,000 tons of garbage per day were being dumped in  
 4 the Meadowlands. Many landfills became orphan  
 5 landfills after NJDEP required closure funding in  
 6 1982. Appropriate closure of landfills is  
 7 important to collect gases and leachate that would  
 8 otherwise impact the environment. Former landfill  
 9 areas include the 1-A Landfill, now home to a  
 10 photovoltaic system, the 1E Landfill, which has  
 11 become passive open space supporting a diverse  
 12 uplands habitat, and as you can see in the picture,  
 13 the before and after of our own Dekorte Park, built  
 14 on a former landfill.

15 MS. MASCARO: The extensive roadway  
 16 system that traverses the District is among the  
 17 most heavily traveled in the nation, so it is no  
 18 surprise that transportation is the largest active  
 19 land use in Meadowlands District.

20 The circulation Chapter of the  
 21 Master Plan reviews different modes of  
 22 transportation utilized by people in the district,  
 23 not just roads, but mass transit, pedestrian,  
 24 bicycles and air transportation. The chapter also  
 25 discusses the movement of goods through the

1 district. Since 2004, there have been several  
 2 significant transportation planning initiatives  
 3 that are described in the draft plan.

4 In 2005, the Hackensack Meadowlands  
 5 Transportation Planning District Act was enacted by  
 6 the legislature, establishing the NJSEA as a  
 7 Transportation Planning District. The TPD Act  
 8 allows for assessment of fees on new developments  
 9 that contribute to the travel demand burdens on the  
 10 transportation system, and the utilization of those  
 11 fees for transportation infrastructure projects  
 12 that benefit the region.

13 As a result of the TPD Act, the  
 14 Meadowlands District Transportation Plan was  
 15 prepared and adopted in 2007. One major  
 16 achievement of the TPD Act is the installation of  
 17 the Meadowlands Adaptive Signal System for traffic  
 18 reduction or MASSTR which was deployed in five  
 19 phases between 2013 and 2017. Funded by a \$10  
 20 million TIGER 11 Grant from the USDOT and using  
 21 \$2.5 million in TPD funds as the required NJSEA  
 22 match, the project is an adaptive traffic control  
 23 system, installed on 124 traffic signals in the  
 24 region. It integrates adaptive traffic signal  
 25 control software, vehicle image detection, and

1 wireless and fiber communication technologies to  
 2 operate signals using real-time data.

3 This network of self-adaptive  
 4 traffic signals efficiently reduce roadway  
 5 congestion, delay, travel time, fuel consumption  
 6 and airborne emissions. The MASSTR System is  
 7 expanded as new traffic signals are installed in  
 8 the region.

9 As noted in the Master Plan, the  
 10 2007 District Transportation Plan is currently  
 11 being updated and is expected to identify and  
 12 address current transportation network challenges,  
 13 as well as future opportunities and improvements.

14 MS. PETROU: Now we get into the  
 15 Plan sections of the document. The Systems Plan  
 16 provides updated objectives for the various systems  
 17 identified in the 2004 plan, for each of the  
 18 categories you see here on the slide.

19 The Systems Plan provides a  
 20 framework of strategic action items that serve as  
 21 the implementation strategy for the goals and  
 22 objectives established by this Master Plan; in some  
 23 cases, requiring additional study to formulate a  
 24 comprehensive and effective response to the issues  
 25 facing the District identified in this Update. For

1 example, our Natural Environment Systems Plan  
2 includes Strategic Action Plans to update the NJSEA  
3 Wetlands Program Plan, to prepare a new District  
4 Wildlife Management Plan and a Natural Resources  
5 Strategic Plan to preserve, protect and restore the  
6 Meadowlands ecosystem. We also plan to update the  
7 District Green Map to highlight recreational  
8 activities in the District and enhance ecotourism.

9 The Economic Development Systems  
10 Plan includes the preparation of amendments to  
11 District zoning regulations to respond to current  
12 conditions in the District and evolving uses, as  
13 well as changes to the official zoning map to  
14 implement the 2020 Land Use Plan.

15 The NJSEA is also in the process of  
16 preparing an updated Floodplain Management Plan for  
17 the District, as mentioned earlier, which is the  
18 basis for the Community Rating System. Resiliency  
19 Strategies are evaluated within a new plan to  
20 enhance protection of properties for both residents  
21 and businesses. The Transportation Systems Plan  
22 provides for an update to the Meadowlands District  
23 Transportation System Plan to identify and address  
24 current transportation network issues, challenges  
25 opportunities and improvements that are needed.

1 Staff is finalizing an RFP for the preparation of  
2 this plan, which we expect will be released  
3 imminently.

4 One or more significant challenges  
5 we face relates to our Housing System Plan, due to  
6 lack of availability of Meadowlands-specific  
7 housing data, as census tracts are not contiguous  
8 to District boundaries. In many cases, our  
9 demographics are skewed by the large population of  
10 Jersey City, the majority of which is located  
11 beyond District borders. The plan recommends the  
12 creation of a District-specific demographic and  
13 housing market study, which will result in a  
14 Meadowlands Housing Plan to identify and recommend  
15 an implementation pathway to accommodate housing  
16 needs in the district.

17 Upon completion of a Meadowlands  
18 Housing Plan, we will work with stakeholders to  
19 enact regulations to codify affordable housing  
20 requirements in the District. In the interim  
21 period, we will continue to utilize our Interim  
22 Policies to ensure no opportunities are lost for  
23 the provision of affordable housing in suitable  
24 locations, and we will work with our constituent  
25 municipalities to address properties in the

1 District appearing in their municipal housing  
2 plans.

3 Our Community Facilities Systems  
4 Plan recommends formulating an updated  
5 Comprehensive Emergency Response Plan to ensure  
6 adequate reasons to natural and other hazards.

7 And finally, we would like to  
8 highlight our historic sites in the district  
9 through interactive mapping of past and present  
10 historically-significant sites.

11 Area plans of the master plan  
12 updates constitute the Land Use Plan for the  
13 Hackensack Meadowlands District. Whereas the  
14 existing Land Use Plan contains detailed,  
15 site-specific information, the Land Use Plan is  
16 much broader in scope and classifies properties  
17 into various categories based on existing or  
18 planned conditions. Area Plans also provide  
19 area-specific planning objectives.

20 The Land Use Plan Map is not a  
21 zoning map, and does not change the zoning on any  
22 property. However, the Land Use Plan does form the  
23 basis for future regulatory processes that may  
24 include changes to zones or the Official Zoning Map  
25 to implement the Land Use Plan. In most cases the

1 Area Plans continue the 2004 categories, although  
2 the map may have changed where some of those areas  
3 are designated.

4 For example, the Commercial Center  
5 Area Plan has expanded to include new retail  
6 centers since developed in Teterboro and Kearny.  
7 The plan also proposes a new Area plan category  
8 termed Sustainable Uplands Reserve. This  
9 classification applies to former landfill areas  
10 many of which were previously located in the  
11 Preserve planning area applicable to wetlands.  
12 This area plan envisions that some of these former  
13 landfills could be used for environmentally sound  
14 development, such as sustainable energy parks like  
15 the 1A Landfill photovoltaic installation, or being  
16 reserved as passive open space to provide for  
17 scarce uplands habitat in proximity to wetlands  
18 areas. As opposed to the Preserve Planning Area  
19 designation, which corresponds to the Environmental  
20 Conservation Zone, the proposed Reserve area would  
21 allow some use of properties for which vertical  
22 development is limited or unlikely, in order to  
23 promote landfill closure.

24 Overall, the plan provides for an  
25 expanded Preserve classification over the 2004

1 plan. The 2004 Master Plan included 7,129 acres  
2 and 2020 Land Use Plan includes 7,563 acres, an  
3 increase of approximately 434 acres. The Area Plan  
4 also addresses consistency with plans from our  
5 stakeholders, including municipal and county master  
6 plans and the Meadowlands Regional Chamber 2040  
7 vision Plan.

8 As I mentioned earlier, there's a  
9 new Sustainable Meadowlands Component Plan, Cheryl  
10 will be speaking about that.

11 MS. CHERYL REZENDES: The concept of  
12 resiliency has come to the forefront in the wake of  
13 flood damage resulting from Hurricane Irene in 2011  
14 and Superstorm Sandy in 2012.

15 However, the NJSEA has long made the  
16 region more resilient through enforcement of its  
17 regulations which effectuate provisions of the  
18 Master Plan, and its work over the past five  
19 decades. The Agency has a long history of adapting  
20 to changing circumstances and will continue to do  
21 so as climate change and sea level rise threaten  
22 both the natural and built environment of the  
23 District.

24 Highlights of the NJSEA's ongoing  
25 resiliency and environmental stewardship efforts

1 include, among others, finished floor elevation  
2 requirements for structures, FEMA CRS participation  
3 resulting in flood insurance rate discounts,  
4 floodplain management activities and wetlands  
5 acquisition and management.

6 Superstorm Sandy came ashore on  
7 October 29, 2012. Sandy wreaked havoc on Bergen and  
8 Hudson Counties with surges that registered  
9 approximately four to five feet above average high  
10 tide. The map on the screen shows water elevation  
11 levels and storm surge depths as recorded by the  
12 MERI sensor at the Barge Club Marino monitoring  
13 station in the Hackensack River in Carlstadt.  
14 Widespread damage and destruction resulted from the  
15 storm.

16 The Rebuild by Design Competition  
17 was launched in 2013 to develop ideas to improve  
18 resilience in regions affected by Superstorm Sandy.  
19 In 2014, a design for the Meadowlands region was  
20 selected as a winner of the competition.

21 Construction of stormwater improvements is  
22 scheduled to begin in Spring of 2020.

23 NJDEP is also developing an  
24 Operations and Maintenance Toolkit of best  
25 practices for managing regional stormwater

1 infrastructure with grant funding from the National  
2 Disaster Resilience Grant Competition.

3 The resulting construction of new  
4 stormwater infrastructure in the project area will  
5 require a multi-jurisdictional approach to  
6 operations and maintenance.

7 New Jersey's climate is changing.  
8 Over the last century, New Jersey has experienced  
9 rising temperatures, increased rainfall, more  
10 frequent extreme weather events, and rising sea  
11 levels. Increases in local sea level result from a  
12 combination of global, regional and local changes,  
13 which are a consequence of activities, such as  
14 burning of fossil fuels, agriculture, and land  
15 cleaning.

16 In 2014 Rutgers University, on  
17 behalf of the New Jersey Climate Adaption Alliance,  
18 convened a Science and Technology Advisory panel,  
19 to help identify alternatives for practitioners to  
20 enhance New Jersey's resilience to regional sea  
21 level rise, coastal storms and flood risk.

22 The 2016 STAP report presented a  
23 range of estimates of sea level rise magnitude for  
24 New Jersey, as well as the probability of those  
25 estimates occurring. The table on the screen

1 summarizes two of these estimates, measured in  
2 feet. The central estimate equates to a 50 percent  
3 probability and the likely range to a 67 percent  
4 probability. Two greenhouse gas emissions scenarios  
5 are represented in this table as well. A high  
6 emissions scenario is anticipated to accelerate  
7 climate change, and thus speed the rate of sea  
8 level rise.

9 The maps on the screen detail the  
10 projected inundation footprints in the District in  
11 2050 and 2100 at a potential sea level rise of two  
12 foot and three foot, respectively, which roughly  
13 corresponds to the projections at the upper end of  
14 the likely scenario in the previous table. The  
15 color gradient reflects the level of projected  
16 inundation and is based on land elevation.

17 The STAP report, SLR estimates are  
18 being used by NJDEP to develop its climate change  
19 and resiliency programs.

20 The master plan provides a review of  
21 potential strategies available to address sea level  
22 rise. Strategies that are deemed to have potential  
23 utility in the District will be recommended for  
24 future in-depth study. The potential strategies  
25 include the following: Comprehensive planning,

1 overlay zones, floodplain regulations, construction  
2 codes, setbacks and buffers.

3 The NJSEA recognizes the importance  
4 of planning for resiliency in the face of sea level  
5 rise. It is recognized that not every strategy will  
6 be feasible for implementation by the NJSEA, but it  
7 is important to explore all strategies that may be  
8 applicable. Planning for resiliency cannot be  
9 conducted in a vacuum and it is essential that the  
10 NJSEA coordinate with its public and private  
11 partners to best prepare the District for the  
12 climate-related challenges ahead.

13 MS. PETROU: In Summary, this plan  
14 serves as an update of the 2004 plan for the  
15 District, which has been implemented with great  
16 success. Development has been occurring as planned  
17 on upland areas, primarily through redevelopment,  
18 and more wetlands have been preserved, restored or  
19 mitigated. Improvements in water quality have  
20 promoted an ever-increasing diversity of fish and  
21 wildlife. We have been able to balance clean energy  
22 objectives with wildlife habitat creation on former  
23 landfills.

24 We have facilitated the creation of  
25 affordable housing within our district boundaries,

1 and have increased the efficiency of our regional  
2 transportation network through our MASSTR adaptive  
3 signal program. Overall, we feel the Master Plan  
4 accomplishes the balancing act inherent in  
5 fulfilling our varied objectives, and sets a path  
6 for the future. As the plan recognizes, we know  
7 there is a lot of work left to do to ensure the  
8 District is well-positioned to thrive  
9 environmentally, economically, and socially in the  
10 coming years, particularly in light of the  
11 challenges we are facing in relation to climate  
12 change.

13 We look forward to continue working  
14 with our stakeholders as we take the next steps in  
15 the process and continue to work on our strategic  
16 planning initiatives to implement the goals and  
17 objectives of our 2020 Master Plan Update. Thank  
18 you.

19 MS. SUNDELL: As far as our master  
20 plan schedule, we're still within our six week  
21 public comment period which extends through  
22 September 16th. After the comment period closes,  
23 the NJSEA will evaluate all of the public comments  
24 that were received, and incorporate resulting  
25 modifications into the Plan. The final plan will be

1 then forwarded to the HMMC, which is the Hackensack  
2 Meadowlands Municipal Committee, who will have 120  
3 days to convey its position. Thereafter, the final  
4 plan will be placed on the agenda of the Board of  
5 Commissioners meeting for adoption in January 2020,  
6 in order to meet the statutory adoption deadline of  
7 February 5, 2020.

8 At this time we would like to invite  
9 public comment. Staff is here to receive your  
10 comments on the draft plan. However, we will not  
11 be answering questions as the format for this  
12 hearing is not a Q & A session. We ask that oral  
13 comments be limited to no more than five minutes to  
14 ensure that everyone here who would like to make a  
15 comment is heard. Comments may also be submitted  
16 in writing, as I said mentioned before, through  
17 September 16th. And we're going to work down the  
18 list. Stephen Pellino.

19 PUBLIC COMMENT

20 STEPHEN PELLINO, ESQ: Stephen  
21 Pellino. I happen to serve as the Borough Attorney  
22 to the Borough of Ridgfield, and I'm here on behalf  
23 of my Mayor and Council and the residents of  
24 Ridgefield, and I have comments in two areas.

25 First of all, I assume you folks as

1 planners and engineers know that there is a foot  
2 and has been for some time, a plan to build an  
3 electric generating station in the Meadowlands  
4 District in the upper end of North Bergen, from  
5 what I understand, near Bellmans Creek. Very close  
6 to the border of Ridgefield and Farview, which is  
7 not in your district.

8 From what I understand, your master  
9 plan, both previously and the new one, would  
10 accommodate this development. And although it is  
11 proposed to be a state-of-the-art plant, it's gas  
12 fired, from what I understand, it would be one of  
13 the largest polluters in the State of New Jersey.  
14 And I think the real key of understanding it, is  
15 the fact that not one kilowatt of power is going to  
16 go to New Jersey. It is all going to go to New  
17 York. So from our point of view, we think this is  
18 inimical to your goals. It certainly is not in the  
19 best interest of the Town of Ridgefield. Quite  
20 frankly, other than the dollars that it will  
21 generate, it is not in the best interest of North  
22 Bergen there either. And every environmental group  
23 that we know of is opposed to this plan, and I  
24 would on behalf of Ridgefield and its residents and  
25 its Mayor & Council, and all of the environmental



1 groups, implore you to look at that in terms of  
 2 your master plan, and in terms of the zoning, which  
 3 I assume has to coincide. It's crazy. It has no  
 4 place here. There is no benefit to anything in New  
 5 Jersey, to anyone in New Jersey, and it's again, I  
 6 think contrary to your goals of conservation and  
 7 preservation. So, a strong message from Ridgefield  
 8 for you to consider. We don't need that, and do  
 9 whatever you need to do is our urging, I say this  
 10 respectfully, from a zoning and planning standpoint  
 11 to make sure that this doesn't happen.

12 The second comment may be a little  
 13 bit off point, because I recognize that you folks  
 14 are planners and engineers from what I understand.  
 15 But if I could convey a message that perhaps you  
 16 could convey to your Commissioners, as I think this  
 17 has been pointing out, the Meadowlands' concept has  
 18 been in place since 1969. It is a concept that  
 19 recognizes that we have a unitary system of  
 20 planning and zoning. That's why we're here for the  
 21 updated master plan. But essentially, to that  
 22 system, is the fact that we share both the benefits  
 23 and the detriments, and that's why, again, you  
 24 folks our planners and engineers, but I think you  
 25 know there is a tax sharing formula so that

1 municipalities like Ridgefield who have little  
 2 development, gets what is called Meadowlands  
 3 Adjustment payments, we get some money in return  
 4 for not developing most of our property in the  
 5 Meadowlands. And for the last three years, I'd say,  
 6 Ridgefield hasn't gotten and the other receiving  
 7 towns, Kearny and Jersey City to some extent, but  
 8 Ridgefield is a big one, hasn't gotten what they  
 9 are supposed to get. And we were involved in  
 10 litigation, and it got made up later on, we're out  
 11 \$385,000 for 2018, we filed a litigation. Again,  
 12 recognizing that you're planners and engineers, my  
 13 message is, the failure to share this on a regular  
 14 basis, it's a timely basis, it is mandated by  
 15 statute, undermines the whole mission.

16 And I also recognize the NJSEA, you  
 17 don't generate the funds, it is a pass-through  
 18 organization. You get the money from the State and  
 19 you hand it out. But what I am asking is, to send a  
 20 message to the Commissioners that they need to be  
 21 proactive. They need to tell the governor, they  
 22 need to tell the legislatures that they got to take  
 23 care of this from a funding point of view, because  
 24 the failure to do so, undermines the whole concept  
 25 of, we are all in this together, we have a unitary

1 plan, we share the benefits and the detriments.  
 2 And in 2015, they changed the funding formula,  
 3 created all kinds of problems and continued to roll  
 4 forward. That's my second message, and again  
 5 that's the message for you to bring, to kick  
 6 upstairs to your Commissioners that they should be  
 7 proactive in this and make sure that we share all  
 8 the benefits and the detriments. Thank you.

9 MS. SUNDELL: Thank you for joining  
 10 us. Are there any other members of the public who  
 11 wish to provide a comment this evening?

12 NO RESPONSE

13 MS. SUNDELL: The public comment  
 14 portion of this hearing is closed. And actually we  
 15 are going to close the entire hearing right now  
 16 because there are no public comments.

17 I want to thank everyone for  
 18 listening to our presentation, and presenting  
 19 comments. Have a good evening. The public hearing  
 20 is now closed.

21 (HEARING CLOSED @6:40 PM)

1 CERTIFICATE

2  
 3 I, BETH CALDERONE, License No. XIO1409, a  
 4 Certified Court Reporter and Notary Public of the  
 5 State of New Jersey, certify that the foregoing is  
 6 a true and accurate transcript of the meeting at  
 7 the place and on the date hereinbefore set forth.

8  
 9 \_\_\_\_\_  
 10 A Notary Public of the State of New Jersey  
 11 BETH CALDERONE, Certified Court Reporter.

<p><b>\$</b></p> <p><b>\$10</b> [1] - 19:19 <b>\$385,000</b> [1] - 34:11</p> <p><b>/</b></p> <p><b>/or</b> [1] - 17:10</p> <p><b>1</b></p> <p><b>1,050</b> [1] - 13:22 <b>1-A</b> [1] - 18:9 <b>1.2</b> [1] - 11:1 <b>1.5</b> [1] - 15:17 <b>10</b> [3] - 1:6; 2:1; 10:14 <b>100</b> [1] - 14:9 <b>11</b> [1] - 19:20 <b>120</b> [1] - 31:2 <b>124</b> [1] - 19:23 <b>14</b> [2] - 2:16; 4:13 <b>15</b> [3] - 13:25; 14:23; 15:2 <b>16</b> [1] - 3:1 <b>16th</b> [2] - 30:22; 31:17 <b>18</b> [1] - 11:15 <b>1968</b> [2] - 4:23; 17:25 <b>1969</b> [1] - 33:18 <b>1970</b> [1] - 5:21 <b>1982</b> [1] - 18:6 <b>1990s</b> [2] - 11:13; 15:23 <b>1999</b> [1] - 14:4 <b>1A</b> [2] - 17:14; 24:15 <b>1E</b> [1] - 18:10</p> <p><b>2</b></p> <p><b>2,500</b> [1] - 13:20 <b>2.5</b> [1] - 19:21 <b>20</b> [2] - 13:4; 17:7 <b>2004</b> [23] - 6:11, 13, 18, 21; 7:11; 8:3, 9, 16; 10:11, 18, 23; 12:1, 10, 17; 13:19; 14:1; 19:1; 20:17; 24:1, 25; 25:1; 29:14 <b>2005</b> [1] - 19:4 <b>2007</b> [4] - 12:20; 17:1; 19:15; 20:10 <b>2008</b> [4] - 12:23; 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