

RESOLUTION 2024-17

NEW JERSEY HIGHLANDS WATER PROTECTION AND PLANNING COUNCIL AUTHORIZATION FOR HIGHLANDS COUNCIL STAFF TO RELEASE THE REGIONAL MASTER PLAN (RMP) AMENDMENT FOR SIX PUBLIC HEARINGS AND 60-DAY COMMENT PERIOD

WHEREAS, the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act (Highlands Act or Act), N.J.S.A. 13:20-1 et seq., created a public body corporate and politic with corporate succession known as the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council (“Highlands Council” or “Council”); and

WHEREAS, Section 8(a) of the Highlands Act mandates that the Council prepare and adopt a Regional Master Plan (“RMP”) for the Highlands Region; and

WHEREAS, the Highlands Act provides that the RMP may be periodically revised and updated after “public hearings;” and

WHEREAS, on September 27, 2018, the Council adopted Resolution 2018-11 “RMP Addendum 2018-1 Procedure for Considering Proposals to Amend Highlands Regional Master Plan” (the “Amendment Procedure”) as an amendment of, and addendum to, the RMP, establishing procedures to be followed by the Council for amending the RMP; and

WHEREAS, on March 20, 2024, Governor Murphy signed Bill A4/S50 (P.L.2024, c.2) setting forth new requirements for municipalities related to the provision of affordable housing. P.L. 2024, c.2 contains many references to the Highlands Region as well as the RMP and includes various requirements for the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and municipalities in the region; and

WHEREAS, P.L.2024, c.2 requires that the Highlands Land Use Capability Zones be used by DCA to allocate affordable housing obligations in the Highlands Region; the RMP Amendment updating the Land Use Capability Zone map is anticipated to be adopted at the April 18, 2024, Highlands Council meeting, and will provide DCA with the most up-to-date Highlands information on which to base their housing calculations; and

WHEREAS, to meet the additional requirements in P.L.2024, c.2, an Amendment to the RMP is proposed entitled “Highlands Affordable Housing RMP Amendment,” which will outline the standards that will govern the potential location of affordable housing and availability of land and resources in the region; the intent of the guidance is to clearly and concisely summarize the applicable Goals, Policies and Objectives (GPOs) of the RMP that apply to affordable housing development and to update various existing GPOs to fit with the requirements of P.L.2024, c.2; and

WHEREAS, the Council shall utilize the Amendment Procedure to adopt the “Highlands Affordable Housing RMP Amendment,” as an amendment of, and addendum to, the RMP, including the requirement that the Highlands Council conduct a minimum of six public hearings before taking final action on the proposed RMP amendment; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 13:20-5.j, no action authorized by the Highlands Council with respect to the adoption of the RMP, or any portion or revision thereof, shall have force or effect until thirty (30) days, Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays excepted, after a copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Council has been delivered to the Governor for review, unless prior to the expiration of the review period the Governor shall approve same, in which case the action shall become effective upon such approval.

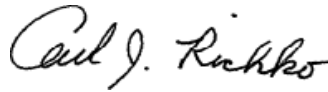
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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Highlands Council staff is hereby authorized and directed to hold five (5) public hearings in various locations in the Highlands Region (one of which may be via video conference), and at least one (1) public hearing in Trenton, on the proposed RMP Amendment “Highlands Affordable Housing RMP Amendment,” and shall also invite the submission of written comments on the aforementioned amendment within 60 days from the date of the public notice of said hearings before the amendment can be adopted by the Highlands Council as an amendment of, and addendum to, the RMP.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Highlands Council at its regular meeting held on the 18th day of April 2024.



Carl J. Richko, Chairman

Vote on the Approval of This Resolution	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Councilmember Alstede			√			
Councilmember Bush			√			
Councilmember Dougherty			√			
Councilmember Dressler			√			
Councilmember Francis		√	√			
Councilmember James			√			
Councilmember Sebetich						√
Councilmember Van Abs			√			
Councilmember Visioli	√		√			
Councilmember Vohden			√			
Chairman Richko			√			