



SMART GROWTH PLANNING ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM
2007 APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Name of municipality Long Hill Township County Morris
Municipal address 915 Valley Rd, Gillette NJ 07933
Administrator Kevin Sluka Phone 908-647-8000 x224
Administrator's e-mail administrator@longhilnj.us Clerk's phone 908-647-8000 x215
Mayor George Vitureira Day phone 908-647-8000 x23
Date environmental commission was established by ordinance 19MAR1973
Name of environmental commission chair Leonard W. Hamilton
Day phone 908-604-2174 e-mail LWH@rutgers.edu
Is the commission a member of ANJEC? yes / no
Date open space committee was established, if applicable _____

Please designate a **contact person** from the project team who is overseeing this application and will be generating quarterly reports on the project, if funded, throughout the coming year. This person will be the liaison between the municipality and ANJEC, and *must be available for telephone contact during the day.*

Name Leonard Hamilton Title Team Leader
Mailing address 684 White Bridge Rd, Gillette NJ 07933
Day phone 908-334-5153 M e-mail LWH@rutgers.edu

Title of project **Bringing Smart Growth to Long Hill Township**
25-word description of project: Revision of portions of the master plan and land use ordinances to implement green building, pedestrian friendly and environmentally sensitive development.

Amount being requested from ANJEC \$ 9,997 Amount of town's cash match \$ 8,487
Value of town's in-kind match \$ 4,995 Total value of project (add all three) \$ 23,478
Source(s) of municipal matching funds in-kind services and Planning Board budget

List all grants obtained or administered by the environmental commission in the previous 5 years:
None

List all environmental commission pending grants (grants applied for):
N/A

Does your town have an environmental/natural resource inventory? yes / no Year completed 2000
25NOV2003
Date of last master plan review by planning board _____

Bringing Smart Growth to Long Hill Township

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this grant application is help fund the revision of two sections of the Long Hill Township Master Plan and to strengthen the associated Land Use Ordinances. The goals will be to incorporate green building techniques, pedestrian friendly commercial areas, and conservation of energy and natural resources, and other goals of the State Plan.

BACKGROUND

The geography and topography of Long Hill Township has demanded attention to environmental issues throughout its history.

One of the main features of the community, and its namesake, is a long hill (a range of the Watchung Mountains) that forms an east-west spine through the township. A historic roadway, Long Hill Road, follows this ridge to connect Berkeley Heights to Basking Ridge.

The northern slope of the ridge forms a portion of the Great Swamp watershed, much of which is protected as the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge and Wilderness Area. Because of the ecological value of this wetland preserve, Long Hill Township has played a leadership role in participating in both the original Great Swamp Watershed Advisory Committee and the Ten Towns Great Swamp Watershed Management Committee. The outflow from the 55-square mile watershed forms the upper Passaic River which bends southward through the Millington Gorge to form the western boundary of Long Hill Township.

The Passaic River then flows in an easterly direction to form the southern boundary of Long Hill Township. In addition to the water from the Great Swamp watershed, it also receives runoff from the southern slope of the Long Hill ridge. The relatively flat valley floods on a regular basis, and much of this land has been acquired and protected by Long Hill Township, Morris County, and the State of New Jersey. The collection of lands that have been protected as a direct or indirect response to stormwater issues make up more than 50 percent of Long Hill's total area.

Long Hill Township is an old community with its major roadways appearing on pre-Revolutionary maps. Environmental issues were not a central issue in these old river communities, so development often placed structures in harm's way. Valley Road, for example, parallels the Passaic River through this valley, forming a major east-west route through the town. The central portion of this roadway has developed into the commercial business district, which has been repeated subjected to flooding. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has approved the construction of a floodwall in Stirling to mitigate this recurrent damage.

THE PRESSURE POINTS

The confluence of several events has positioned the Township for significant development over the next few years, and the Planning Board, Township Committee, and Environmental Commission want to redirect this development in ways that (a) preserve and sustain our natural resources, (b) preserve the traditional character and quality of life of our town, and (c) revitalize our commercial business areas:

- Long Hill Township has been under a voluntary sewer ban due to problems with inflow and infiltration. After several years of study, the town is now planning to move forward quickly to begin the repairs and upgrades that will allow this ban to be lifted. Major development plans that have been stalled by this sewer ban can now be expected to move forward quickly.
- The Long Hill Township Master Plan and the associated Land Use Ordinances were written more than a decade ago with only minor revisions being made through an intervening Reexamination Report. Many of the philosophies of development, concerns about natural resources, and visions for Long Hill's future have changed during that period, so the Planning Board has expressed a sense of urgency in updating the Master Plan and Land Use Ordinances before the sewer ban is lifted.
- In 2006, the Long Hill Township Committee passed a resolution in support of the Cool Cities program supporting the principles of the Kyoto Protocol to reduce energy use and global warming. The Environmental Commission is preparing a comprehensive Energy Reduction and Resource Protection Proposal that will seek to integrate these principles into the daily activities and long term planning in Long Hill Township. The proposal will include initiatives for energy conservation, alternative energy sources, and ordinances requiring green building approaches to new construction and redevelopment.
- One area of the Township that has significant development pressure is the Valley Road commercial business district. Included among the parcels that might be developed are vacant land, deteriorating structures, and the potential for combining smaller commercial lots into a larger project. Currently our Master Plan and land use ordinances show 13 different zones within this corridor and the by-right development under this structure would lead to a streetscape and traffic situation that current residents and township officials do not want to see happen.
- A second area with development pressure is the village of Meyersville. Several key properties have been vacated and additional properties are being held by willing sellers. It is clear that the face of Meyersville will change within the next decade, and once again, our Master Plan and land use ordinances do not provide proper guidance.

THE PROPOSAL

The first portion of this proposal is requesting funds update two elements of our Master Plan:

- Valley Road Commercial Business District
- Meyersville Village Center

The goal will be to develop a new vision for both of these areas that will include traffic calming, pedestrian friendly circulation, and a streetscape that is more consistent with a traditional village (small-scaled structures, close to street, etc.) rather than mall or strip mall configurations.

The second portion of the proposal seeks assistance in revising the Long Hill Township Land Use Ordinances in support of the revised Master Plan. The goals of this revision will include:

- Best Management Practices for control of stormwater for *every* project, not just those that trigger the N.J. Stormwater Regulations. The Valley Road corridor is bounded by wetlands or flood plain areas and Meyersville is immediately adjacent to the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. Both areas, and in fact the entire Township, should have this additional level of protection. Among the topics that would receive special consideration are:
 - Reduction in the use of curbing
 - Permeable walkways and driveways
 - Use of bioretention areas
 - Use of rain gardens

- Long Hill Township has slipped into the same mode as most towns in New Jersey, gradually permitting the automobile to guide development. Under our current regulations for both the Valley Road and the Meyersville areas, variance-free applications result in large setbacks from the roadway, large concrete parking lots for each establishment, multiple turning lanes, and so forth. The Planning Board envisions more modern concepts of Smart Growth that create areas with more aesthetic appeal and less environmental destruction. Among the topics that would receive special consideration are:
 - Storefronts that are closer to the street
 - Shared parking facilities where practical
 - Required trees and greenways within parking areas
 - Pedestrian-friendly ways to get from one shop to another
 - Trails and walkways that link to nearby neighborhoods
 - Traffic calming

These goals represent a major overhaul of both the Master Plan and the Land Use Ordinances. Most of the expenses will be for services of the professionals that serve the Planning Board and the Township Committee. We have a deep and talented pool of volunteers on both the Planning Board and the Environmental Commission who will be involved in all aspects of this project.

PROJECT TEAM

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WORK PLAN

- Jul 1-31, 2007* *Project team leader and consultant review and comment on ANJEC draft grant agreement; final agreement signed by Mayor and ANJEC; Environmental Commission approves work plan.*
- Aug 1-31, 2007* *Planning consultant begins collecting data and developing concepts; team members submit ideas and concepts to team leader; team leader develops newspaper article and arranges dates and facilities for series of public meetings; ANJEC staff member and press invited to kickoff meeting (tentative date 31AUG2007).*
- Sep 1-30, 2007* *Planning consultant continues collecting data and developing concepts; team leader formally presents project to the planning board and governing body; public workshop scheduled for comments; mayor presents project to the business community; Environmental Commission prepares display of project and brochures for annual street fair; team members meet to discuss general approaches to ordinance and master plan revisions; team leader prepares and submits quarterly report to ANJEC.*
- Oct 1-31, 2007* *Public workshop scheduled for comments; team members meet to discuss general approaches to ordinance and Master Plan revisions; team leader and planning consultant work on draft of Master Plan elements; team leader and Environmental Commission draft revisions of land use ordinances.*
- Nov 1-30, 2007* *Present draft of Master Plan revisions to planning board for discussion and public comment (1 ½ hr portions of both monthly meetings); team leader and planning consultant prepare final draft of revisions; township attorney review and planning consultant review and comment on suggested ordinance revisions; team members meet to review draft ordinance revisions.*
- Dec 1-31, 2007* *Planning Board reviews and discusses final version of Master Plan revisions and votes on resolution to accept; team leader presents document to Township Committee and prepares press release on project; team leader prepares and submits quarterly report to ANJEC.*
- Jan 1-31, 2008* *Planning Board begins deliberations on ordinance revisions (1 ½ hr portions of both monthly meetings); Planning Board attorney provides ongoing guidance; team leader submits press releases to invite public participation.*
- Feb 1-29, 2008* *Planning Board begins deliberations on ordinance revisions (1 ½ hr portions of both monthly meetings); planning board attorney provides ongoing guidance; team leader submits press releases to invite public participation.*

- Mar 1-31, 2008* *Planning Board continues deliberations on ordinance revisions (portions of both monthly meetings); planning board attorney provides ongoing guidance; team leader submits press releases to invite public participation; revisions go to township attorney for final review; team leader prepares and submits quarterly report to ANJEC.*
- Apr 1-30, 2008* *Planning Board votes on resolution to adopt ordinance changes; team leader, mayor, and planning consultant meet with Morris County Director of Planning to review the changes and coordinate with county policies.*
- May 1-31, 2008* *Township Committee reviews ordinance changes and presents for public comment, then deliberates on motion to approve before returning to planning board; team leader prepares final press release on project; team members and planning consultant prepare revisions (where necessary) of documents that go to prospective applicants.*
- Jun 1-30, 2008* *Team leader works with webmaster to update materials on township website; team leader and planning consultant prepare and submit final report to ANJEC; township administrator, planning and zoning secretary, and other staff members prepare revised copies of materials for dissemination.*



TOWNSHIP OF LONG HILL

Environmental Commission

COUNTY OF MORRIS

GILLETTE, HOMESTEAD PARK, MEYERSVILLE, MILLINGTON, STIRLING

Website: <http://www.longhillnj.us/boards/envirocomm.html>

Township Offices:

915 Valley Road
Gillette, NJ 07933
Tel.: 908-647-8000
Fax.: 908-647-4150

MEMO TO: ANJEC
P.O. Box 157
Mendham NJ 07945

FROM: Leonard W. Hamilton, Ph.D.
Chair

DATE: 21 March 2007

RE: Smart Growth Planning Grants for Municipalities

The Long Hill Township Environmental Commission reviewed a draft of the proposal entitled *Bringing Smart Growth to Long Hill Township* at its regularly scheduled meeting on 19FEB2007. The Commissioners unanimously approved the motion to move forward with submission of the grant application.

The Environmental Commission views itself as an integral part of planning process in Long Hill Township. We regularly submit detailed reports to both the Planning Board and the Zoning Board to bring Best Management Practices to individual applications.

The Environmental Commission has already drafted an update of the Conservation Element of the Master Plan that incorporates many of the goals of the Smart Growth proposal. We stand ready to work closely with the Planning Board and the Township Committee to make these important revisions to the Master Plan and the Land Use Ordinances.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

The Environmental Commission and project team leader Leonard Hamilton (also chair of the EC) will coordinate several different approaches to ensure broad public participation in the project:

- Press releases about the project will be regularly submitted to the *Echoes Sentinel* newspaper.
- All special meetings of the Planning Board or Township Committee meetings will be announced in the *Echoes Sentinel*.
- The Environmental Commission will host two public workshops to solicit comments and ideas about the project.
- The Environmental Commission will set up a booth at the Township's annual Street Fair and pass out brochures describing the project.
- Regular updates and the final results of the project will be posted on the Township website.

Resolution 07-105

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE LONG HILL TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL
COMMISSION'S SMART GROWTH APPLICATION TO ANJEC

WHEREAS the Long Hill Township Environmental Commission was duly established by resolution on March 19, 1973; and

WHEREAS the Environmental Commission is charged with the responsibility of helping to preserve and protect the environmental resources of the Township; and

WHEREAS the Environmental Commission has prepared a grant application entitled *Bringing Smart Growth to Long Hill Township* to be submitted to the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC); and

WHEREAS the project proposed by this grant application involves the revision of elements of the Long Hill Township Master Plan and supporting changes in Land Use Ordinances; and

WHEREAS the results of these changes in the Master Plan and Land Use Ordinances will provide long-term benefits to the citizens of Long Hill Township; and

WHEREAS this grant application requests funding in the amount of \$9,997 from ANJEC; and

WHEREAS the Township of Long Hill is to provide matching funds in the amount of \$4,995 for in-kind services and \$ 8,487 in additional cash funding for the project;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee of the Township of Long Hill, County of Morris, State of New Jersey does hereby approve the submission of this grant application and agrees to the terms of matching funding should the grant be awarded.