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NJMC SUSTAINABLE PLANNING SERVICE TO ASSIST CARLSTADT

LYNDHURST, N.J. – The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission is now assisting the Borough of Carlstadt – in addition to the Borough of Rutherford - in attaining New Jersey Plan Endorsement, a designation that promotes responsible planning and offers valuable financial incentives. The NJMC is aiding the Borough at no cost through its new Sustainable Communities Planning Service.

“We are proud to welcome the second municipality to take advantage of the Sustainable Communities Planning Service,” said Joseph V. Doria, Acting Chairman of the NJMC and Acting Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs. “This meets our goal of two municipalities joining by the end of 2007 and will demonstrate the continued strength of the Meadowlands Commission’s investment in its constituent municipalities.”

Municipalities that undergo the state Plan Endorsement process align their planning documents with the goals and policies of the New Jersey State Plan as they relate to smart growth principles and other planning initiatives. Municipalities that receive Plan Endorsement can qualify for financial and technical incentives to help implement their plans. Incentives include enhanced scoring for grant funding, low-interest loans, tax credits, and streamlined regulatory review.

Rutherford was the first municipality to enter into a partnership with the NJMC for Plan Endorsement. The NJMC has offered the assistance of its professional planning staff to all 14 Meadowlands District municipalities. The NJMC is currently helping both Carlstadt and Rutherford take the first step in the endorsement process by submitting nearly 1,000 pages of planning documents to the state Office of Smart Growth. The NJMC will stand to save both municipalities thousands of dollars by scanning the Borough’s paper documents and creating the digital files for submittal to the state. NJMC staff will work with and on behalf of the two towns throughout the remainder of the Plan Endorsement process.

“It is exciting to see progressive communities like Carlstadt and Rutherford step up and take advantage of the wide array of services the NJMC has been privileged to offer free to municipalities in the past five years,” said Robert Ceberio, Executive Director of the NJMC. “Increasingly, the nearly half a decade of funding, planning and services in our neighborhoods, commercial zones and open spaces, and the more than \$40 million sent to municipalities over this period, is yielding a more visible return on investment for residents.”

The Sustainable Communities Planning Service was created in July of 2007 to make the NJMC’s planning services more accessible to municipalities and gather them under one roof so that municipalities can better take advantage of them. The service can also assist District towns with many other aspects of planning, including affordable housing plans, downtown revitalization, and green building.

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