

# ANNUAL REPORT AND ACHIEVEMENTS SUMMARY 2011



## THE REGIONAL CENTER

BRIDGEWATER • RARITAN • SOMERVILLE

A partnership for a better tomorrow

IN SOMERSET COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

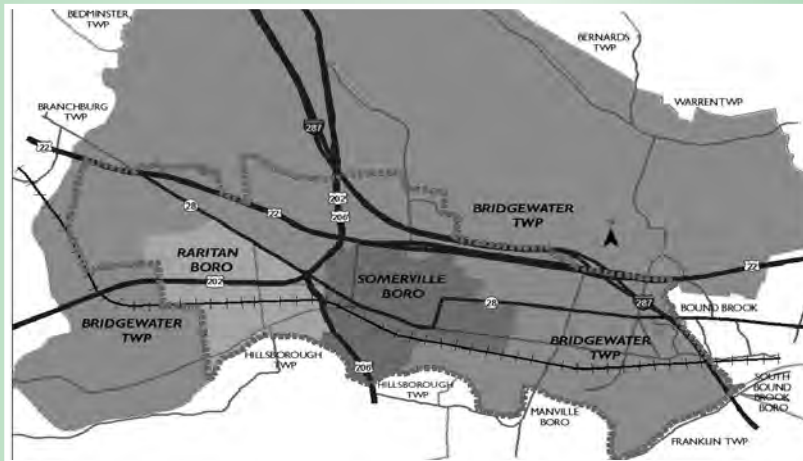
[www.regionalcenterpartnership.org](http://www.regionalcenterpartnership.org)

## THE SOMERSET COUNTY REGIONAL CENTER

*The Somerset County Regional Center provides a mechanism for a unique level of cooperation between government and business to foster an environment of smart planning and cooperative growth utilizing resources unavailable elsewhere.*

### THE EVOLUTION OF THE REGIONAL CENTER

The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan defines a Regional Center “as the focal point for the economic, social and cultural activities of a region with a compact, mixed-use core and neighborhoods offering a wide variety of housing types.” The Somerset County Regional Center, including the Raritan and Somerville Boroughs and a portion of Bridgewater Township, features the required mix of residential, commercial, and office uses at an intensity that make expansion of public transportation options feasible; enjoy a core of commercial activity bounded by open space; serve as an employment center of regional significance supported by institutional, civic, recreational and other public uses; have available a variety of goods and services that serve a regional market and large scale retail, sports, and entertainment facilities, along with specialized or niche retail; attract large-scale corporate offices and industrial parks; and have mid-size educational facilities and cultural facilities.



The Regional Center initiative began early in 1996 when an informal partnership among officials from the three communities, the Somerset Alliance for the Future, the Somerset County Chamber of Commerce (the latter two combining to become the Somerset County Business Partnership), and Somerset County government crafted an application to the New Jersey State Planning Commission to establish New Jersey’s first inter-municipal Regional Center.

In May of 1996, the State Planning Commission approved the application and designated the communities as the first multi-jurisdictional center in the state. The approval defined a 14.2 square mile district to serve as the focal point for enhanced planning and expedited public approvals to benefit a population of approximately 25,000 residents and 40,000 workers.

As a condition of designation, the State Planning Commission required the formation of an organization to ensure the successful implementation of the goals and objectives. The Regional Center Partnership of Somerset County was created in 1998 to provide the coordinated planning framework that is needed to achieve the goal of improving the identity and functionality of the Regional Center, the quality of life for residents, and creating a favorable environment for business.

Since its inception, the Regional Center Partnership has provided leadership, technical support, and assistance to the county and three municipalities to shape planning policies that ensure that the Somerset County Regional Center continues to be the premier location in Somerset County to live, work, and recreate.

The following pages offer a review of the recent activities of the Regional Center Partnership and the three communities that supported the mission of the Regional Center designation during 2011. It was a successful year, building on a history of progress and anticipating increased success in the years to come.

## DUKE FARMS FOUNDATION EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EXPRESSES SUPPORT FOR RARITAN BOROUGH RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT

The Regional Center Partnership has long supported Raritan Borough's vision for development along the Orlando Drive corridor and the related enhancements of the waterfront along the Raritan River. Based on extensive visioning in 2008 and 2009, Raritan officials have been taking steps toward implementing the vision and identifying complimentary uses along the waterfront while increasing public awareness of the river as a key asset and natural resource in the community.



To address the issue and its relationship to the planned public opening of Duke Farms, Tim Taylor, Executive Director of the Duke Farms Foundation visited the Regional Center Partnership on September 21, 2011 to outline the Foundation's plan for the property. Taylor explained that the officials of the Foundation were cognizant of the planning in Raritan and eagerly anticipate the synergy between the two projects. Duke Farms enjoys over three miles of shoreline along the Raritan River, much of which is across from the Borough of Raritan at Orlando Drive.

Taylor explained that the Duke Farms Foundation was formed in 1998 by the Board of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and continues to be funded by that organization to enable to oversee the improvement and maintenance of over 2,740 acres that includes 8 lakes, 100 structures, 36 miles of private roads and trails with numerous bridges, waterfalls, sculptures, and fountains.

The mission of the Foundations is to "Be a model of environmental stewardship for the 21st century, and inspire visitors to become informed stewards of the land." Following that mission, Duke Farms seeks to "become a healthy and sustainable eco-system for native flora and fauna comprised of multiple habitats amidst a human dominated landscape on the urban fringe integrated with regional environmental strategies. A place of education, enjoyment, and research that enhances the environmental health of the region." To that end Duke Farms encourages initiatives within any of the five boroughs / townships that benefit from its many attributes.

### ROUTE 22 SUSTAINABLE CORRIDOR SHORT & LONG-TERM IMPROVEMENTS

A major step in the development of a plan for the **Route 22 Sustainable Corridor Long-Term Improvements** took place on Saturday March 19, 2011 with the convening of a public design charrette. A large group of interested parties contributed numerous potential concepts which were subsequently vetted by the County. Additionally, the County held several focus group meetings with Bridgewater-Raritan and Somerville High Schools, the Foothill Road Association, and businesses along the corridor.

The County conducted an online survey of residents and commuters familiar with the Route 22 corridor. In excess of 1,200 responses were received and incorporated into the Concept Development Plan.

On June 9, the NJ Department of Transportation (DOT) organized the **Route 22 Sustainable Corridor Short-term Improvements** Public Information Center in the County Administration Building. Another well attended event generated minor concerns to be addressed, though there was overwhelming support for implementing the improvements. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2013.



## PETERS BROOK RESIDENTIAL RAIN BARREL REBATE PROGRAM

A cooperative effort on the part of the Regional Center Partnership and the New Jersey Water Supply Authority (NJWSA) resulted in the kickoff of the Peters Brook Residential Rain Barrel Rebate Program in July of 2011. Utilizing a grant from the NJWSA, residents within the Peters Brook Watershed are entitled to a \$50 to \$200 rebate on the purchase and installation of residential rain barrels that have been inspected and approved by the NJWSA.

Rain barrels conserve water for household use, ease stream erosion by reducing the amount of runoff during heavy storms, and reduce the pollutants accumulated from the impervious surfaces.

The Peters Brook Watershed, which encompasses parts of the Regional Center communities of Bridgewater Township, Somerville and Raritan Boroughs, is a highly urbanized and integral natural resource in the Regional Center. There are approximately 6,000 homes in the watershed resulting in approximately 30% of the land being covered by pavement, rooftops, and other impervious surfaces. In older urban areas, rainwater runoff from these hard surfaces flows directly into streams, picking up pollutants along the way.

The New Jersey Water Supply Authority and Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Somerset County have previously held four neighborhood-based "Build-A-Rain-Barrel" workshops within the Peters Brook Watershed. The workshops generated significant interest in rain barrels and increased awareness of stormwater issues in the Regional Center communities. The rebate program, which stems from the success and feedback of those workshops, serves as a pilot program to develop effective education and outreach for stormwater projects in the Peters Brook and other urban settings.



## STATE STRATEGIC PLAN

The State Strategic Planning Process (SSPP), a cabinet level approach to statewide planning lead by the Christie Administration is a program introduced in Trenton during 2011 with potential benefit to the Regional Center Partnership.

The goals of the SSPP include identifying high-growth industries that can be accommodated in economically sustainable smart-growth areas, rectify contradictory state regulatory regimes that otherwise hamper economic development, and identify state strategic planning issues within state government (eg, capital investment, tax assessment, etc.). The SSPP approach differs from the current state planning process as it seeks to overcome certain deficiencies in the draft State Development & Redevelopment Plan for achieving sustainable economic growth.

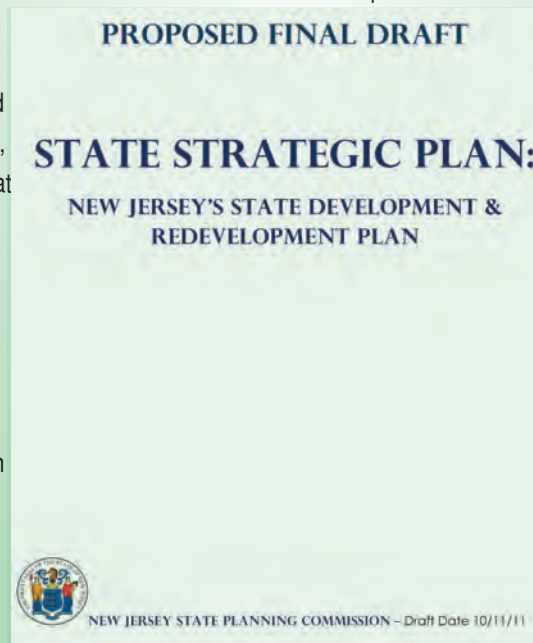
During 2011 the State Planning Commission adopted a preliminary State Strategic Plan supported by six public hearings. Upon review of the draft document, the Regional Center Partnership offered the following comments:

- Support the overall shift in the approach to State planning from a

top-down directive placed on local jurisdictions to one that emphasizes horizontal alignment of state agencies with state planning goals

- Support for repositioning the Office for Planning Advocacy within the Department of State and New Jersey Business Action Center

- Support to build on the state's assets and strategic location and the need to strengthen cities, towns, and neighborhoods.



The Regional Center also determined that certain inclusions can be made to strengthen the plan:

- Reinforce the municipal role in defining local land use policies and the county role as liaisons between municipalities and the State
- Prioritize strategic plans and Priority Investment Area Framework before implementing the Scorecard System
- Develop targets and measures to track success of the Priority Investment Framework

- Include language to assure opportunities for all jurisdictions to participate in the State Strategic Plan
- Recognize the critical role of Regional Centers

## REGIONAL CENTER PLAN ENDORSEMENT UPDATE

Plan Endorsement is a voluntary review process that ensures the coordination of state, county, and municipal planning efforts in achieving the goals and policies of the State Planning Act. Through Plan Endorsement, all levels of the three Regional Center municipal governments have developed coordinated capital investment and planning implementation mechanisms that are consistent with the State Plan and with each other. With approval from the State, the Regional Center will be in a better position to receive financial and technical incentives to assist in making the vision for the three communities and the Regional Center a reality.

The Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA) determined the three municipalities have conducted a significant amount of “visioning” work over the past several years and therefore approved the Regional Center’s waiver request from further visioning work that is a requirement for plan endorsement.

OPA and the state agencies including NJDEP proceeded with the Consistency Reviews of the municipal and Regional Center planning documents to establish comparisons with the goals and objectives of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. The Consistency Reviews conducted in 2011 identified certain inconsistencies. As part of the Plan Endorsement process, OPA prepared four draft “Action Plans” - one for the Regional Center and one each for the three municipalities - to accomplish tasks including preparation of the land use element, natural resources inventory, etc., with a requirement to address the inconsistencies within a specified time period. In accordance with State Planning Rules, the Regional Center was originally set to expire on January 7, 2008, but by virtue of the amended Permit Extension Act, the Interim Regional Center is extended to June 30, 2013. The objective is to address the Action Plan issues within this time period.

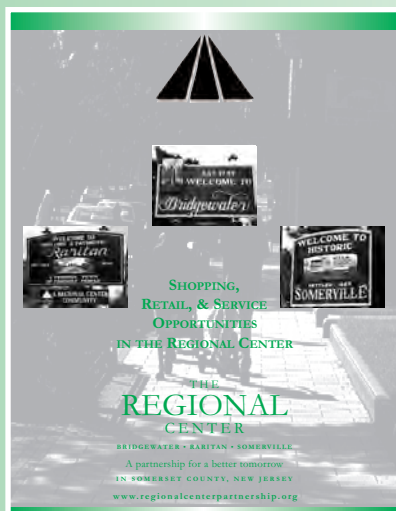
The end results of the Plan Endorsement process will allow the Regional Center to be reestablished for two (2) years with the agreed upon revised boundaries. Once the Action Plan issues have been satisfactorily addressed, the Regional Center will receive a Certificate of Eligibility with a recommendation from OPA that the Somerset County Regional Center be renewed by the State Planning Commission for another ten years.

A contentious element of the Endorsement Process was addressed by the Regional Center Partnership and Somerset County Planning Board through letters to OPA Executive Director Gerald Scharfenberger objecting to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)’s position that all environmentally sensitive/flood prone lands, including along the Raritan River and Peters Brook, should be cut out of the Somerset County Regional Center area. Following a meeting with OPA and NJDEP, resolution was achieved that allowed the Regional Center to maintain existing boundaries.

The next step in the process is the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Regional Center and the state Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA). This MOU is to be executed in the first half of 2012 at which time the Regional Center can focus on coordinating local and regional investment strategies with the state’s economic development structure.

## REGIONAL CENTER SHOPPING, RETAIL, & SERVICES OPPORTUNITIES BROCHURE

The Somerset County Regional Center Partnership, fulfilling its mission of promoting the benefits available within the three Regional Center communities, released an informative brochure describing the numerous and varied shopping opportunities available. In 2011 the Regional Center Partnership published a brochure entitled “Shopping, Retail, and Services Opportunities



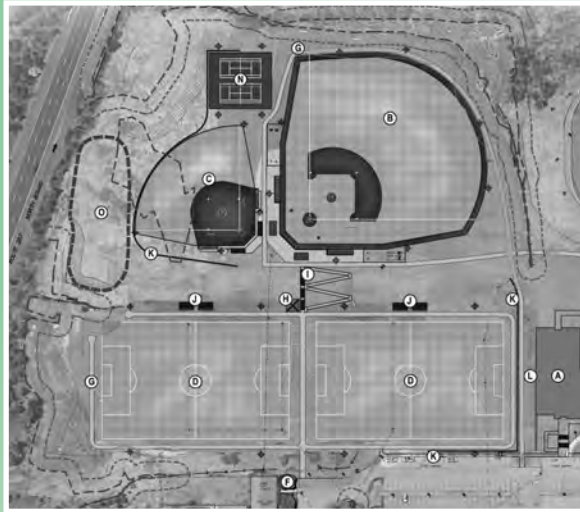
in the Regional Center” which followed the 2010 publication of “Business & Employment Opportunities in the Regional Center” and “Recreation and Fitness Opportunities in the Regional Center,” both of which provide a summary of available resources and key contact information for businesses and facilities in Raritan, Somerville, and the portion of Bridgewater within the Regional Center.

The four-page brochure offers a concise overview of the downtown retail, shopping centers, community centers, and the mall. The descriptions are divided by community location and provide a brief inventory of the type of retail and service available in each location.

All three brochures have been made available online at [www.regionalcenterpartnership.org](http://www.regionalcenterpartnership.org) under the “Newsletters” link or by contacting James Ruggieri at the Regional Center Partnership at 908-231-7021.

## SOMERSET COUNTY VO-TECH MULTIPURPOSE ATHLETIC FACILITY

Based on the ever-increasing demand for quality multi-purpose athletic fields, the Regional Center Strategic Master Plan recommended exploring options for creating a regional multi-purpose athletic complex. The site considered to be most ideal for accommodating this type of regional facility is the existing playing fields at the Somerset County Vocational-Technical School (SCVTS) campus in Bridgewater Township located on Vogt Drive.



A Stewardship Group was formed to explore non-traditional funding possibilities for implementing the multipurpose athletic facility Master Plan described in the Vo-Tech Multipurpose Athletic Facility Final Report. The group consists of representatives from Somerset County Vo-Tech, the County Park Commission, Regional Center Partnership, County government, and Bridgewater, Raritan, and Somerville.

### *Preferred Alternative*

This group continues to investigate potential funding sources with the expectation of reaching out for financial support in the short term.

## SOMERVILLE RAIL STATION RENOVATION

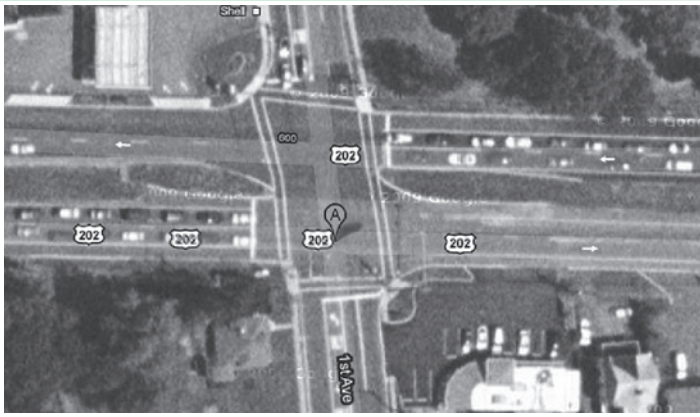
Representatives from the Borough of Somerville and New Jersey Transit held a dedication ceremony for the new Somerville train station. The \$16 million dollar train station renovation project consists of two new 710 foot long high-level side platforms with canopies, two new elevator cabs with machine rooms, new inbound waiting room with restrooms, new outbound platform waiting room, new platform shelters, new platform ramps and stairs, new communication and electrical rooms, new storage/janitor spaces, new accessible path of travel (sidewalk) towards South Bridge Street, and an alteration to the inbound pedestrian tunnel entrance. Rehabilitation work involved the two existing freight elevator shafts, lighting and drainage improvements to the pedestrian tunnel, and exterior stairs which lead to South Bridge Street.



## ROUTE 202 AND FIRST AVENUE

The 2009 Route 202 Corridor Assessment & Multi-Modal Plan recommended improving the jug handle ramp at Route 202 and First Avenue in Raritan Borough. Upon review of the recommendation the NJ Department of Transportation (NJDOT) opted not to pursue the specific recommendation, proposing their own plan for improving the intersection.

The NJDOT conceptual plan calls for widening the state highway from 2 to 3 lanes in each direction through the intersection and adjusting the amount of traffic signal “green time” to allow for increased traffic flow from the side streets.



It was noted that this is only a preliminary concept plan that was not yet presented to the state's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for funding.

The Regional Center Partnership, upon review of the NJDOT recommendation, expressed concern about the impact the widening would have on existing residential properties, why the concept plan did not include improvements to the ramp system onto First Avenue that would improve its level of service, and the impact of traffic from the proposed residential development.

As negotiations continue, the Somerset County Freeholders have suggested that NJDOT work closely with County engineering and planning and the Borough of Raritan to develop a workable and affordable plan to fix an intersection that continues to operate at an “F” level of service.

## SOMERVILLE COMPLETES MUNICIPAL PARKING LOT RECONSTRUCTION

The Downtown Somerville Association championed an effort to reconstruct the two municipal parking lots on the north side of East Main Street. Utilizing a \$600,000 no interest loan from Main Street New Jersey combined with additional bonded funds, the lots were redesigned to operate more efficiently while adding landscaping and enhanced lighting.

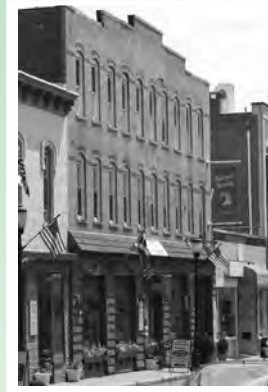
Additionally, all parking meters were removed and replaced with two “Pay on Foot” stations in each lot. The stations allow payment for parking for an indeterminate time and do not require that owners return to their car with a receipt after paying. Parking fees in the lots remain at \$.50 per hour.

## SOMERVILLE ARTS DISTRICT PROPOSAL

The Borough of Somerville entered into discussions with the Printmaking Center of New Jersey and various stakeholders for transforming the Division Street area into a successful arts/culture district that would serve as an economic and cultural/ fine arts catalyst for downtown Somerville and Somerset County.



With a plan based on the principles of “The Greater Somerset Arts Initiative: A New Model in Public / Private/Cultural Partnerships”, the fine arts district is expected to



contribute to the economy, engage the community, compliment business attraction efforts, and serve as a component of the marketing/economic development strategies for the Regional Center. The initiative will support the existing efforts of the Somerset County Cultural & Heritage Commission's state-required master plan already in place.

The 2011 week-long “Arts On Division” events on Division Street proved successful once again, attracting thousands to the arts and culture events and the numerous restaurants offering price fixed menu specials for the week. Arts On Division kicked off a summer that included the annual Kugler-Anderson Memorial Day Bicycle Race, two street fairs, classical car parades on Main Street and concerts on the Courthouse Green every Friday evening.

## REGIONAL CENTER EARNS RIVER AWARD

The Regional Center Partnership (RCP) received the 2011 Blue Raritan River award from the Sustainable Raritan River Collaborative for ongoing support to improve the water quality and public appreciation of the Raritan River and its tributaries within the Regional Center.



The recognition was based on past and current initiatives including RCP Challenge Grants for projects benefitting the Raritan River and the critical involvement of the County Park Commission, the three Regional Center municipalities, and the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders.

## MUNICIPAL LAND USE CENTER'S BRIAN REILLY VISITED THE REGIONAL CENTER PARTNERSHIP

Brian Reilly, Executive Director of the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Center (MLUC) at The College of New Jersey, visited the Regional Center Partnership to provide details on the work of the MLUC including the Sustainable Jersey initiative and the NJ Department of Transportation sponsored Mobility and Community Form program.

The MLUC mission is to support municipal governments in meeting the region's land use challenges by identifying opportunities for improved development and redevelopment, open space acquisition, and farmland preservation through education and training, essential tools, technical assistance, and referrals to lead to more livable communities for the 21st century.

The organization focuses on issues relating to the Regional Center including encouraging more compact, walkable, aesthetically attractive, and less automobile-dependent development and redevelopment patterns.

Mr. Reilly explained that MLUC works "on the ground" to help local governments engage their communities, other levels of government, and various planners to create strategies and actions that maximize the value of their places for the long term. He described and illustrated how the MLUC accomplishes its mission through three major program areas –the NJ Sustainability program, transportation and land use planning, and a focus on sustainable economies at the local and regional levels.

## 2011 MUNICIPAL CHALLENGE GRANTS

The goal of the annual Regional Center Challenge Grant Program is to help achieve the broadly accepted Regional Center Partnership Vision that includes downtown redevelopment, neighborhood revitalization, connecting the three sub-centers, and using natural resources to shape development consistent with community planning initiatives. The program provides matching grants of up to \$20,000 per project for each municipality.

### **Bridgewater Township – Adamsville School Pathway**

Funding was approved to construct a walking path connecting the Mount Pleasant Villas and Schindler Terrace apartment complexes to Adamsville Elementary School. The apartments are located on East Main Street behind Adamsville School, located on Union Avenue. This walkway connection will eliminate the need to provide hazardous school busing for the 28 students that live in the apartments and attend Adamsville School.

### **Raritan Borough -Orlando Drive/Raritan Greenway Implementation Plan**

Funding was approved to partner with Rutgers University to host a "Raritan River Brownfields Studio" that will take the 2009 Orlando Drive Vision Plan and Corridor Design Study to a level of implementation by developing a "regenerative" urban design plan.

### **Somerville Borough - Par Course Fitness System (Clarks Woods)**

Funding was approved to install a series of fitness exercise stations (par course) at periodic intervals along a pedestrian pathway to be constructed in the Clarks Woods section of the Peters Brook Greenway. As with the central Somerville par course fitness system project, the Clarks Woods par course fitness project will help fulfill the bicycle and pedestrian objectives of the Regional Center Bicycle, Pedestrian & Greenways Systems Connection Plan.



## 2011 REGIONAL CENTER SUMMIT AN INFORMATIONAL SUCCESS

### Focus On Connecting Companies & Government

The 4th Annual Regional Center Summit, "Connecting Companies & Government: Collaborative Strategies for Economic Recovery & Competitiveness" drew numerous representatives of business and government for an informative session at the Bridgewater Marriott.

The session included keynote addresses from Lauren Moore, Director, Business Advocacy at the New Jersey Business Action Center and Lucy Vandenberg, Executive Director of PlanSmartNJ, an independent, non-profit civic planning and research organization committed to the advancement of sound land use planning and regional cooperation.

Mr. Moore discussed "Short-term Realities of the NJ Business Climate & the Role of the Christie Administration," focusing on the activities of the Business Action Center, the Economic Development Authority, and Choose NJ. Ms. Vandenberg addressed "A Long-range View of the Interrelationship Between Land Use & Economic Competitiveness."

A panel discussion included Dan Kennedy, AICP/PP, Deputy Director, Office of Planning Advocacy; Timothy J. Touhey, CEO/Executive Vice President, New Jersey Builders Association; Janet Luton Perantoni, Dean, Continuing Education, Raritan Valley Community College; Michael Metzgar, Executive Director, Workforce Development, Raritan Valley Community College; and Robert Bzik, AICP/PP, Director of Planning, Somerset County Planning Board.



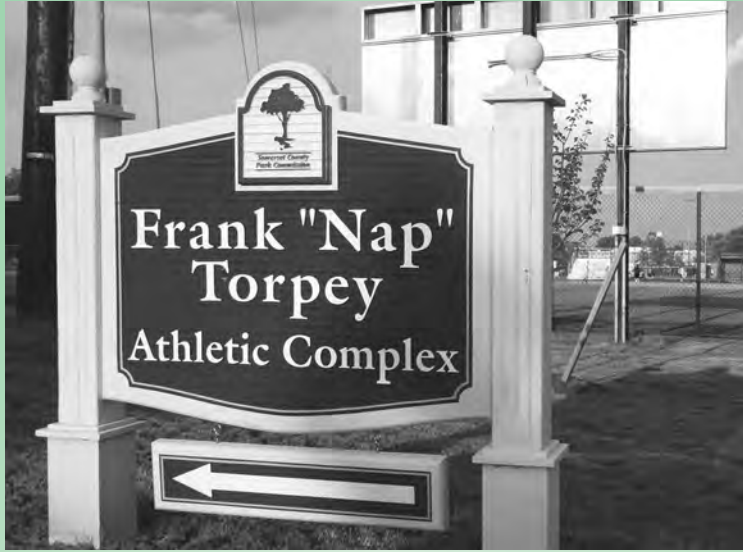
The panel discussion focused on the direction that the State is taking in terms of strategic planning and how the Regional Center communities may benefit; how the building industry is addressing the current economic issues and how the industry can implement recovery strategies; and an examination of the role that Raritan Valley Community College plays in enhancing the economic competitiveness of the Regional Center communities and Somerset County.

# TORPEY COMPLEX

## BICYCLE-PEDESTRIAN ACCESS PLAN

Throughout the year the Regional Center Partnership and the Somerset County Planning Board struggled with the merits and design for the development of a Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Plan for the area in proximity to the Frank "Nap" Torpey Athletic Complex in the Funderne section of Bridgewater. With the understanding that a plan will impact the residents of Southside Avenue, Nimitz Street, and Loeser Avenue in both Somerville and Bridgewater, careful consideration was given throughout the year to various alternatives.

Among the options under early discussion was a bike-pedestrian pathway system along Southside and Loeser Avenues and Nimitz Street. The plan called for a pedestrian and bicycle pathway along the streets, providing ease of access to the complex. Outreach to the neighbors living in proximity to the Complex resulted in a re-thinking of the plans in order to accommodate everyone's concerns.



Subsequent to the presentation of the original plan, the Regional Center Partnership convened a public meeting to review concerns and options. The April 27, 2011 open meeting included elected officials, approximately 10 residents, and a representative on Nitta Casings. Upon review of the concerns expressed by the neighbors, the Executive Committee of the Regional Center Partnership determined that moving forward on the access project in its current form was not in the best interest of the community. The Partnership is committed to continuing to work with the Somerset County Park Commission on development of an overall strategy to improve access to the complex.

As the year ended, there was no plan in place. In the event that an agreeable plan can be developed, the project will be funded by the

Regional Center Partnership with a grant in the amount of \$30,000. Of that amount, approximately \$10,000 will cover surveying work which must be performed before construction plan design.

## REGIONAL CENTER AUDIT REPORT FOR 2011

Following the required public bidding process for a government agency, the Regional Center Partnership retained the auditing firm of Suplee, Clooney & Company to prepare the annual audit report for the year ending December 31, 2011.

After a detailed audit of the Partnership expense records and financial documentation for 2011, Suplee, Clooney & Company reported that they found the organization's financial records and changes in net assets and cash flows for 2011 to be in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles.

Regional Center financial information is available for review online at [www.regional-centerpartnership.org](http://www.regional-centerpartnership.org) under "Minutes."

## SUPERMARKET RETURNS TO DOWNTOWN SOMERVILLE

Groundbreaking for the Saker World Class Shop Rite in downtown Somerville took place on March 22, 2011 with the grand opening ceremony on October 14, 2011. The ShopRite is on the site of the former Pathmark and marks the return of a supermarket to the downtown for the first time in five years.

Additional plans for the development on the west end of the central business district include construction of a bank branch at the intersection of Veterans Memorial Drive and South Davenport Street; a total of 223 residential rental units, 42,600 sq. ft. of retail, an 8,000 sq. ft. restaurant, and a 40,000 sq. ft. health club.



## PROJECTS & EVENTS OF NOTE IN REGIONAL CENTER COMMUNITIES

### BRIDGEWATER

The NJ Department of Transportation (NJDOT) convened a public information center to review tentative plans to improve the I-287/ Route 202/206 exit ramp. The proposed plan is to extend the existing left side exit lane on Route 202/206 by several hundred feet. The land used for the extension will come from the center median. To alleviate the difficulty moving into the right lane to exit to the Bridgewater Commons, NJDOT is proposing installation of additional signage further north on I-287.

Bridgewater Township has implemented an ordinance that modifies the land use zoning code relative to the installation and use of solar, wind, and other renewable energy-type structures.

### RARITAN

The "Stone Bridge at Raritan" (formerly "Willow Walk") residential project obtained a "Letter of No Further Action" from NJ Department of Environmental Protection, which allowed the developer to break ground.

The Borough government explored the advantages of shifting its police dispatch operations to the Somerset County 911 system.

### SOMERVILLE

Continuing a successful initiative that began by combining the Somerville and Somerset County Health Departments, the Borough merged the local library with the Somerset County Library system and turned police dispatch operations over to County 911.

## PARTNERSHIP REVISES BY-LAWS

The Regional Center Partnership researched and implemented minor updates and clarifications to the RCP Bylaws as proposed by the organization's Executive Committee.

One of the main revisions was removal of the reference to the Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC) which no longer applies to non-profit organizations per Executive Order by Governor Jon Corzine. In addition, the term of Partnership officers was increased from one to two years beginning in January of 2012. The deadline for municipalities to notify the Partnership Secretary of the names of voting representatives was changed from January 10 to "before the January Regional Center Partnership re-organization meeting."

A change in the Bylaws will allow the Somerset County Park Commission and County Business Partnership to be able to have an alternate voting member similar to the current provision for the Board of Chosen Freeholders.

## VIET NAM TRAVELING WALL DRAWS THOUSANDS TO BRIDGEWATER

The Somerset County Park Commission, in partnership with the Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders and Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 452, welcomed the American Veterans Traveling Tribute (AVTT) and Traveling Vietnam Wall to North Branch Park in October.

The AVTT includes several Cost of Freedom memorials and exhibits including the 80-percent-scale version of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, DC, a 370-foot long replica that contains every name etched on the original.



Ceremonies honoring American Veterans over the five days that the Wall was on display. Participants included: Senator Kip Bateman, NJ Deputy Commissioner for Veterans Affairs Ray Zawacki, NJ Assemblyman Peter J. Biondi, Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 452 President John

LeGates, Freeholders Bob Zaborowski, Patrick Scaglione & Peter Palmer, Chief Gregory Skinner, Peapack-Gladstone Police, Somerset County Prosecutor Geoffrey Soriano, Somerset County Sheriff Frank J. Provenzano, Somerset County Mutual Aid Fire Coordinator Doug Rue, Somerset County Director of Veterans Affairs Peter Niemiec, Bridgewater Mayor Patricia



Flannery, US Congressman Rodney Frelinghuysen, John K. Kitchen, Vietnam Veteran, Park Commission Director Ray Brown, US Congressman Frank Pallone, Jr., and Rolling Thunder President Gary Scheffmeyer.

The U.S. Veterans Administration, through the Veterans Healthcare Network, provided counseling services, Rolling Thunder provided overnight security for the exhibit, and the Somerset County Freeholders presented service medals to veterans from all branches of the armed services.

**THE 2011 SOMERSET COUNTY  
REGIONAL CENTER**

The Board of Trustees includes 12 municipal representatives (3 appointed and 1 local private/institutional sector representative from each municipality, 3 County representatives, 1 each from the Somerset County Business Partnership and the Somerset County Park Commission, and 4 at-large private sector/institutional representatives.

Chair: Rose Evans  
Vice-Chair: Troy Fischer  
Treasurer: Freeholder Peter Palmer  
Secretary: James Ruggieri (non-voting)

**At-large Private Sector/Institutional Representatives**

At-large Private Sector/Institutional Representatives  
Rose Evans, Chair, CPM, Vice-President,  
Levin Management Corp\*  
Troy Fischer, Vice-Chair, Senior General Manager,  
Bridgewater Commons\*  
Glenn McCreech, Vice-President of Operations,  
Somerset Medical Center\*  
Jennifer Reilly, Senior Operations Manager,  
Ortho Clinical Diagnostics

**Somerset County Board of Chosen Freeholders**

Patricia Walsh, Freeholder\*  
Freeholder Peter Palmer, Alternate\*

**Somerset County Planning Board**

Robert Bzik, Director of Planning, Somerset County  
Bernie Navatto, Chair, Somerset County Planning Board

**Bridgewater Township**

Mayor Patricia Flannery\*  
Councilman Matthew Moench  
Planner Scarlett Doyle  
Henry E. Reynolds, Jr., local private sector representative

**Raritan Borough**

Mayor Jo-Ann Liptak\*  
Councilwoman Stephanie Gara  
Planner David Maski  
Michael R. Di Bianco, local private sector representative

**Somerville Borough**

Mayor Brian Gallagher\*  
Councilman Ken Utter  
Planning Board Vice-Chair Phil Decker  
Rick St. Pierre, local private sector representative

**Somerset County Business Partnership**

Michael Kerwin, President/CEO

**Somerset County Park Commission**

Ray Brown, Secretary/Exec. Director

\*RCP Executive Committee member

**THE REGIONAL CENTER**

**BRIDGEWATER, RARITAN, SOMERVILLE • SOMERSET COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

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