**Ordinance Review Utilizing the Center for Watershed Protection’s Code & Ordinance Worksheet**

The following ordinance reviews were conducted on six towns from the New Jersey Highlands and Kirkwood-Cohansey Clusters. This includes Lopatcong, Hampton, and Newton Townships from the New Jersey Highlands cluster and Bridgeton Township, Elmer, and Upper Deerfield Township from the Kirkwood-Cohansey Cluster. In this review, all chapters of town codes and ordinances were accessed via an online service, either eCode360.com or clerkshq.com. For this set of reviews, the Center for Watershed Protection’s Code & Ordinance Worksheet was used. This worksheet is set up for ease of use so that, ideally, each community could fill it out as a self-evaluation. Each classification, suburban, rural, etc., has a list of questions divided into categories like “Street Width” or “Tree Conservation.” Some town types have adjusted lists to either include or exclude different topics, like “Structured Parking,” which is open for answer on the Urban and Highly Urban lists but is shaded gray on the other lists to mark it as something to ignore. This way the person or entity filling out the form will not have to spend time searching for code that does not exist.

To answer all of the questions, each town’s code was read through to identify the chapters that would be relevant. All questions were answered with “yes,” “no,” “not applicable,” or “codes are silent.” If a town did not mention anything related to a question on the worksheet, the question was marked “codes are silent.” If a question refers to the subject of another question that was previously answered with “codes are silent,” then the answer is “N/A.” Some answers were blocked off on certain questions, and if that interfered with the previous methods, then the next best answer was selected and reasoning noted. For each “yes” a town earns some amount of points depending on the importance of that question. Most of the questions are worth one (1) point, while some are worth two (2), and others worth 0.5. For answering “no,” “N/A,” or “codes are silent,” no points are received, and at the end of the worksheet a percentage is calculated from how many points were earned out of the total possible points. For all six towns, the percentage range was 21% - 37%, so there is room for improvement everywhere.

For example, Hampton Township was completely silent on code related to the questions in the “Sidewalk” category. All rural towns have the same “Vegetated channel” answers. For all of the towns, their code was almost completely silent when it came to parking related questions. This may be due to that information being located in a source that was not available online. The worksheet describes questions (or principles) 26-94 as related to runoff reduction, and the percentage range for those questions is 20% to roughly 34%. Many of the local ordinances can be updated to encourage such activities as encouraging:

* the use of landscape features to manage stormwater runoff from parking lots
* more flexible development designs to utilize open space and cluster options
* encouraging the use of green infrastructure to disconnect rooftop runoff
* requiring the planting of trees at sites where none exist

While the municipalities are complying with existing regulations, local ordinances can be changed to encourage and/or require the use of green infrastructure techniques and low impact development practices to reduce the water quality impact from new development. These techniques and practices can also be applied to redevelopment areas. The next step should be to work with the municipalities to begin crafting more low impact development/green infrastructure friendly ordinances. The Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) may be a group that could provide assistance in this endeavor.