

Middletown Wins State Planning Award for Port of Belford Plan

Written by Middletown Township Public Information Office
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MIDDLETOWN, NJ - Middletown Township has been awarded a New Jersey Planning Officials 2009 Achievement in Planning Award for the Port of Belford Feasibility plan.

"I am very proud that that this invaluable project has been recognized by planners across the state, said Mayor Pamela M. Brightbill. "The award belongs to everyone who has worked so hard to bring this important plan to fruition including township staff, Seafood Co-op members, and professionals from Rutgers University and Brookdale Community College," said Mayor Pamela M. Brightbill.

The long-range plan, which is being recognized for its significant contribution to planning, examines existing conditions at the port, provides a master plan for the future and offers implementations strategies for commercial development that would complement and support local fishing industry. The port, which fronts the Raritan Bay and is accessible from Port Monmouth Road, has existed since colonial times. The Co-op established in 1952, sells the fish participating fisherman catch, retaining a portion of the profit to continue running the docks.

Grant funds from the New Jersey Office of Smart Growth provided resources for plan development. The plan was prepared for the township by the Louis Berger Group, said Township Planner Jason Greenspan.

"The Port of Belford Feasibility plan offers viable options that could be employed to revitalize the port," Greenspan said. It includes potential strategies, activities and uses including expansion, enhancement and development of the existing fishing operations, potential development of an interactive/discovery center, a marine science/research center a park and open space component and possibly even a full service inn. State, federal and county grants are all being considered to implement facets of the revitalization plan.

The award presentation will take place at the Woodbridge Hilton Hotel in Woodbridge in late April. The final plan, which was completed earlier this year, can be reviewed at the Middletown Planning Department and www.MiddletownNj.org