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PlanSmart NJ Hires New Executive Director

TRENTON, NJ—The Board of Directors of PlanSmart NJ is pleased to announce that after an extensive search process, Stephen H. O'Connor, Ph.D. has accepted the Board's offer to be PlanSmart NJ's new Executive Director.

In a [message](#) from Board President Karen Jezierny of Princeton University, she says that, "Stephen O'Connor is highly qualified both in non-profit management and land use issues." She added that "I am confident Steve will advance PlanSmart NJ's mission of making New Jersey a better place to live, work, and play." Jezierny, who announced the new hire, thanked Dave Fisher, K. Hovnanian for leading the executive director search. In addition to Jezierny, the committee members included Kate Gibbs, ELEC; Richard Goldman, Drinker Biddle & Reath; and Neil Yoskin, Cullen & Dykman.

Stephen O'Connor brings a wealth of experience to the position having served as the Executive Director of New Jersey Housing Assistance Corporation and President of New Brunswick Tomorrow in the late 90s. More recently, he was the Director of the Runstad Center for Real Estate Studies at University of Washington. Dave Fisher stated that "Steve has a deep understanding of affordable housing issues and understands the important role infrastructure, open space preservation, and regional planning play in economic development. He noted that "his expertise makes him well suited to build on PlanSmart NJ's body of work and to advance the policy recommendations of PlanSmart NJ's Stranded Assets Project."

Dr. O'Connor holds a Master's degree from the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University and a Ph.D. in Planning and Public Policy from the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University. His dissertation, "State Mandated Versus Market-Based Location of Affordable Housing" is serving as the foundation for his upcoming book on the history of the Mount Laurel Doctrine in New Jersey.

Steve will assume the position of Executive Director on April 3rd. Ann Brady announced her retirement in January and will step down on March 31st.

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PlanSmart NJ is the state's premier, independent regional planning organization, having built a reputation for integrity, substance and balance. For four decades, this Trenton-based 501 (c)(3) nonprofit has worked to improve the environment, reduce disparities

plan**smart** nj

better**land use**

better**lives**

and improve job, housing and transportation choices for people across New Jersey. For more information, go to www.plansmartnj.org.

EDITOR'S NOTE: A photo of O'Connor is attached.

