

Editorial by New Jersey Highlands Coalition Board Member Michael Keady

## Highlands plan

**Thursday, August 06, 2009**

In mid-July, this newspaper covered the Highlands Council's build-out projections for eight municipalities in Warren and Hunterdon counties. The council has since revealed the projection for Holland Township in Hunterdon County.

The number for Holland is dramatically lower than the projection from the Council on Affordable Housing for full build-out in Holland, when every appropriate piece of land is built upon. COAH projects 649 new housing units for Holland. The Highlands Council projection is 262 new houses at full build-out. The COAH figure is 2½ times the Highlands Council projection because COAH assumed retaining the current zoning in Holland Township.

In contrast, the Highlands Council applied the stricter rules of their Highlands Regional Master Plan that aims to ensure any future growth in Holland is sustainable and is based on scientific analysis of water availability and septic capacity.

Conforming to the Highlands master plan will positively transform the future for Highlands region municipalities. It will end suburban sprawl on farm fields and ensure that most agricultural land remains in farming. It will preserve our views of wooded hills and ensure that our streams and drinking water remain pure.

In Holland, our local citizens group has started a petition to support our township committee in their expressed desire to conform to the Highlands master plan. Holland residents who like the idea of lower, sustainable growth can add their names to the petition by going to [hollandhighlands.org](http://hollandhighlands.org) and clicking on the petition link at the top of the page.

Michael Keady

President, Friends of Holland Highlands Holland Township