

**TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG  
PLANNING BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES  
7:00 pm**

February 25, 2026

Chairman Samson called the Planning Board Meeting to order.

A Prayer was offered followed by the Oath of Allegiance.

Chairman Samson stated “Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided indicating the time and place of the meeting in accordance with Chapter 231 of the Public Laws of 1975 by advertising a Notice in The Star Ledger and The Express-Times and by posting a copy on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building.”

Sworn In: Attorney Bryce swore in Terry Lawler as Class II member Term expiring 12/31/2026

Present: Members Coyle, Hardy, Lawler, Mengucci, Palitto, Weeks, Vice-Chairwoman DiLeo, Chairman Samson. Also present were Attorney Bryce and Planner Bloch and Engineer Wisniewski.

**Old Business:**

**Minutes** – Approve the minutes of January 28, 2026 on motion by Member Mengucci, seconded by Vice-Chairwoman DiLeo. Roll call vote:

AYES: Members Coyle, Hardy, Mengucci, Palitto, Weeks, Vice-Chairwoman DiLeo, Chairman Samson.

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: Member Lawler

**Ordinance Digital Signage** – Planner Bloch prepared an ordinance to update signage within the township to include digital signs. Discussion ensued with suggestions for the updates. An updated ordinance will be prepared for the March meeting. Planner Bloch noted that language was added to allow for digital signs to be incorporated into already signs. Some conditions: sensor to adjusting sign brightness, hours of operation to be cut off at 9 pm and turned on again at 7 am for the normal business hours, illumination of the signage based on distance, how often the sign image can change, no white backgrounds, already existing signs, square footage of the sign, etc.

Attorney Bryce – Suggested language to be included “these free-standing signs will not have off sight advertising” to avoid billboard language.

Planner Bloch will revise the ordinance to reflect suggestions for the March meeting.

**Data Centers** – Continued discussion by the board as to what conditions might be applied. This will continue next month. Planner Bloch indicated that he recently visited a data center in East Windsor and toured the facility and spoke to the operation team. He said there is a lot of misunderstandings as to what happens in data centers. There are two types of technology for the actual computer systems; there's air cooled and liquid cooled and both of those don't require much water at all. The liquid cool really does not need water; it is a sealed system. It's kind of like antifreeze in your car. It's not pulling water. The chillers for the building are the same as any other warehouse or large building that use fresh water. They put off heat like the liquid cooled and the air-cooled systems and those are pulled down and vented out from the HVAC system and then they have the chillers to help cool down the building.

Engineer Wisniewski said right now we have computer and data processing centers in the ordinance but there are no conditions beyond the normal ROM performance standards and Dan mentioned that 20, 50,000 to million plus square feet. A facility like that will pull a lot of juice and have a lot of demand. Engineer Wisniewski put together a list of concerns like electrical, additional load to the grid, on-site permanent fossil-based power generation not permitting that, incorporating renewable energy production like a solar field or using a geo-thermal cooling system, addressing noise concerns, etc.

Attorney Bryce – Noted Adam will put conditional use standards in the ordinance that will address those issues so applicants will have to satisfy those.

Adam Wisniewski – Will put an ordinance together with conditional use standards for the next meeting.

### **New Business:**

**Cubes at US 22SUB 1, LLC** – Request for a one-year extension pursuant to NJSA40:55D-52 on Block 102, Lots 901 & 9.03. Attorney Christopher Costa of Stevens and Lee was present to represent The Cubes for the extension. On motion by Member Lawler, seconded by Vice-Chairwoman DiLeo a one-year extension was granted. Roll call vote:

AYES: Members Coyle, Hardy, Lawler, Mengucci, Palitto, Weeks, Vice-Chairwoman DiLeo, Chairman Samson.

NAYS: None

**Ordinance No. 26-02 – Referred by Council for Consistency Review** – Amend the Code of the Township of Lopatcong, Chapter 67 Affordable Housing and Chapter 243, Zoning and Land

Use, Article XX Administration and Enforcement. Motion by Member Mengucci, seconded by Member Weeks to find Ordinance No. 26-02 Consistent with the Master Plan. Roll call vote: AYES: Members Coyle, Hardy, Lawler, Mengucci, Palitto, Weeks, Vice-Chairwoman DiLeo, Chairman Samson.  
NAYS: None

R 26-06

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING BOARD OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY, REVIEWING AND FINDING ORDINANCE NO. 26-02 CONSISTENT WITH THE MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, the Township Council of the Township of Lopatcong (hereinafter referred to as “Council”), has introduced at the first reading Ordinance 26-02, amending the Code of the Township of Lopatcong, Chapter 67, Affordable Housing, and Chapter 243, Zoning and Land Use, Article XX Administration and Enforcement (hereinafter referred to as “Ordinance”) and has referred same to the Township of Lopatcong Planning Board (hereinafter referred to as “Board”) for review and comment pursuant to the Municipal Land Use Law as specified at N.J.S.A. 40:55D-26 and N.J.S.A. 40:55D-64; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-64 and N.J.S.A. 40:55D-26 the Board has reviewed the Ordinance and believes same to be consistent with Master Plan of the Township of Lopatcong as reexamined and amended.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Board of the Township of Lopatcong that it hereby finds Ordinance No. 2026-02 consistent with the Master Plan of the Township of Lopatcong, as reexamined and amended, and makes no recommendations thereon.

CERTIFICATION

I, Margaret B. Dilts, Planning Board Secretary of the Planning Board of the Township of Lopatcong, County of Warren and State of New Jersey do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted at Planning Board Meeting on Wednesday, February 25, 2026.

Margaret B. Dilts  
Secretary

**Amended Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan** – Adopt Resolution Amending Housing Element of the Master Plan so as to Incorporate the Conclusions and Recommendations as Provided Therein. Motion to adopt this Resolution by Vice-Chairwoman DiLeo, seconded by Member Palitto. Roll call vote:

AYES: Members Coyle, Hardy, Lawler, Mengucci, Palitto, Weeks, Vice-Chairwoman DiLeo, Chairman Samson.

NAYS: None

**R 26-07**

**RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING BOARD OF THE TOWNSHIP OF  
LOPATCONG, WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY,  
ADOPTING THE FAIR SHARE PLAN PREPARED BY DANIEL N. BLOCH, P.P.,  
A.I.C.P. OF COLLIERS ENGINEERING & DESIGN DATED MAY 16, 2025 AND  
AMENDING THE HOUSING ELEMENT OF THE MASTER PLAN OF THE  
TOWNSHIP OF LOPATCONG SO AS TO INCORPORATE THE CONCLUSIONS AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS AS PROVIDED THEREIN**

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Lopatcong Planning Board (hereinafter referred to as “Board”) has adopted a comprehensive Master Plan and conducted a Re-Examinations of same and made certain amendments thereto; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Lopatcong has historically addressed affordable housing obligations as mandated through Southern Burlington County NAACP v. Township of Mount Laurel, 67 N.J. 151 (1975) and 92 N.J. 158 (1983) (hereinafter referred to as “Mount Laurel Doctrine”) through participation with the Council on Affordable Housing (hereinafter referred to as “COAH”) and for which the Board has adopted various amendments to the Township’s Housing Element and Fair Share Plan of the Township’s Master Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board last amended the Master Plan’s Housing Element and Fair Share Plan on August 22, 2018 pursuant to the Township of Lopatcong’s settlement of its Declaratory Action for Fair Share Compliance approved by the New Jersey Superior Court on January 31, 2018, for which a Final Judgment of Compliance and Repose was entered by the Superior Court on January 10, 2019; and

**WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Fair Housing Act (hereinafter referred to as “Act”) was amended on March 20, 2024 by P.L. 2024, c. 2, which, inter alia, abolished COAH and established a new Mount Laurel Doctrine compliance process and mechanism for participating municipalities (hereinafter referred to as “Program”); and

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Lopatcong filed a Complaint for Declaratory Compliance and, as a product of participation in the Program, established Fourth Round affordable housing obligations of zero present need and eighty-one (81) unit prospective need for the years 2025 through 2035; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Lopatcong is within located within the area regulated by the New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act, that impacts development build-out in various ways; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Lopatcong has entered into as settlement as to its Fourth Round Affordable Housing obligations with Fair Share Housing Center, which requires certain revisions to the Township’s Housing Element and Fair Share Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan prepared by Daniel N. Bloch, P.P., A.I.C.P. of Colliers Engineering & Design dated **May 16, 2025** (hereinafter referred to as “2025 HEFSP”), addresses the amendments necessary to the Master Plan to enable the implementation of the Township’s Mount Laurel Doctrine affordable housing compliance plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Township of Lopatcong Planning Board conducted a public hearing regarding the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan amendment to the Master Plan on February 26, 2026 said hearing having been noticed and conducted in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40:55D-89, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-11 and N.J.S.A. 40:55D-13; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board finds that the **2025 HEFSP** is reasonable and appropriately addresses the planning for the provision of affordable housing within the Township with due regard and consideration of environmental and other factors impacting such development;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Planning Board of the Township of Lopatcong, that it hereby adopts the **2025 Housing Element and Fair Share Plan** as prepared by Daniel N. Bloch, P.P., A.I.C.P. of Colliers Engineering & Design as appended hereto and further amends the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan of the Township of Lopatcong's Master Plan so as to incorporate such recommendations and conclusions as contained therein.

The foregoing is a true copy of the Resolution adopted by the Planning Board of the Township of Lopatcong at its meeting of February 26, 2026.

Date: February 26, 2026

---

Beth Dilts, Planning Board Secretary

Chairman Samson – Motion for adjournment – Member Lawler made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Member Coyle. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret B. Dilts

Board Secretary