

# Plans, Master Plans and Amendments

## Report to the Board March 11, 2021 through May 11, 2021

<b>Municipality</b>	<b>Mendham Township</b>
<b>Documents</b>	Mendham Twp. Master Plan
<b>Public Hearing</b>	<b>4/29/2021</b>
<b>Summary</b>	Master Plan update including new Land Use and Housing Plan Elements

- The Mendham Twp. Master Plan includes two sections addressing land use and housing. The Land Use section (LUP) examines existing conditions, environmental and sustainability issues, and development densities. Particular importance is placed on the findings of a new groundwater resources study that considers changes in target nitrate concentration standards, methodological and technical advances. Changes are recommended to regulate future development to overall lower densities to bring future development potential into balance with the new study findings.
- The LUP identifies various assumptions and principles affecting future development including existing development patterns (e.g. subdivision opportunities and home sizes), cultural principles (e.g. roadscape and historic preservation), environmental factors (e.g. slopes, woodlands and surface waters), groundwater limitations (e.g. nitrate dilution and capacity limitations), public infrastructure and regional responsibilities (e.g. headwaters protection, affordable housing). The LUP also includes a resiliency and environmental sustainability section discussing storm resiliency, energy supply, flood prone areas, hazard mitigation areas and environmental infrastructure.
- Key objectives for new development include: the alignment of future densities and intensities of development with existing infrastructure capacity, providing for constitutionally required fair share of affordable housing based on the limitations of its infrastructure and the nitrate study found in the document, ensuring that total development does not degrade groundwater quality below standards established in the 2020 Nitrate Dilution and Current Planning Capacity Model Report, protection of high quality headwaters, minimization of flooding and preservation of the Township’s traditional rural/historic character. The LUP also includes a list of specific sites recommended for preservation for public purposes.
- While a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan was adopted in 2005, the Township is not currently participating in the COAH process or seeking a declaratory judgement from the courts, citing the lack of sanitary sewers and opportunity for multi-family housing. Therefore, the Housing Plan (HP) does not address a specific numeric affordable housing obligation under a Fair Share Plan, but is based on the requirements for a Housing Element found in the Municipal Land Use Law. It addresses zoning related to housing, municipal demographic and employment conditions, existing and projected housing stock, housing devoted to low-and moderate-income households and the Township’s history of affordable housing compliance.
- The HP anticipates greater attraction to places like Mendham Township due to the pandemic’s influence on housing preferences and increased telework opportunities. It recommends the Township work to promote and market its character, school system and open space characteristics to attract potential home buyers and new residents.
- The HP also addresses the aging demographics of its residents and the need to adopt policies that will allow a greater number of seniors to age-in-place; remaining in the community while being able to receive care. To address this issue, the Plan recommends improving accessory apartment regulations to increase housing diversity though greater use of accessory dwellings, allowing more elderly to live with family.