

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
MORRIS COUNTY PLANNING BOARD**

30 Schuyler Place
June 19, 2025

Morristown
New Jersey

Meeting Held In-Person and Via WebEx

Chairman Rattner called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS LAW

Chairman Rattner stated that the Secretary of the Board provided public notice of this meeting in a legal notice in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act and invited members to join in for the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

ROLL CALL

Those present were:

Commissioner Stephen Shaw	Joseph Barilla, Director, Planning and Preservation
Steve Rattner, Chairman	Virginia Michelin, Assistant Director, Planning and Preservation
Isobel Olcott, Vice-Chair	Bill Johnson, Esq., County Counsel
Daniel Happer	Anthony Soriano, Supervising Planner
Gregory Johnsen	Mike DiGiulio, Senior Planner
Joseph Falco, Alt. 1	Kevin Sitlick, Senior Planner
Michael Cortese, Alt. 2	Alyssa Ercan, Recording Secretary
Christopher Vitz, County Engineer	

STATEMENT REGARDING COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS LAW

Ms. Ercan read the Statement Regarding Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Law.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Vice-Chairman Olcott moved the Planning Board Meeting Minutes of May 15, 2025. Commissioner Shaw seconded the motion. The motion was approved by roll call vote.

ROLL CALL

VOTE	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Tayfun Selen, Commissioner Director			
Stephen Shaw, Commissioner	X		
Thomas Mastrangelo, Commissioner Alt.			
Steve Rattner, Chairman	X		
Isobel Olcott, Vice Chair	X		
Nita Galate, Secretary			
Everton Scott			
Daniel Happer			X
Gregory Johnsen	X		
Joseph Falco, Alt.1	X		
Michael Cortese, Alt.2			
Christopher Vitz, County Engineer	X		
Roslyn Khurdan, (County Engineer Alt)			

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director's Report for May 2025 was reviewed and accepted by the Board and will be placed on file.

Chairman Rattner noted that the Director's Report included, "Waiting for the final invoice for the Lake Hopatcong Aeration System." He asked Mr. Barilla if that means the aeration system was approved and will be installed. Mr. Barilla replied no, and Chairman Rattner asked the purpose of the invoice. Mr. Barilla responded that the invoice is for the consultant on the project. Mr. Falco noted that the lake does have aeration systems in some of the smaller coves. Mr. Barilla explained that there are smaller systems set up but that this system would be much larger. Additionally, there are still issues determining where to site the system and how to pay to maintain it long-term, such as maintenance and electrical costs.

REPORT OF FUNDS RECEIVED

Funds received for May 2025 were \$14,415.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Environmental and Watershed

County Wastewater Management Plan – Mr. Barilla reported that Chester Borough's Wastewater Management Plan will be adopted in July. He also noted that for Mount Arlington Borough's Plan, there is still discussion between a developer and the Department of Environmental Protection on whether the expansion of a plant is necessary. Mr. Barilla then reported that Staff are still working on the buildout for Long Hill Township. Commissioner Shaw commented that he was under the

impression that amendments to Wastewater Management Plans were no longer being accepted. Ms. Michelin responded that they are still allowing amendments and chapters.

County Watershed Activities – Mr. Barilla had no updates to provide.

Land Subdivision and Zoning

Developments Reviewed – Vice-Chairman Olcott highlighted the following item from the Land Development Review Committee meeting held on June 18, 2025.

Lincoln Park, Lincoln Park Plaza - Addition, 2025-16-3-SP-0 (County Route 511)

This site plan is for a 14,034 square foot addition and parking area improvements at the Lincoln Park Plaza on 9.4 acres. The existing improvements in the redevelopment area and four existing mixed-use and residential structures will be removed. An additional 21 parking spaces are proposed. Site access will remain from the existing connections to Comly Road (County Route 511) and Boonton Turnpike (US Route 202). The two existing full-access driveway connections to Main Street will be replaced with a single full-access driveway connection and an ingress-only driveway connection. Stormwater management entails the use of an infiltration basin for the improvements. The existing on-site system will service the remaining portions of the property. The site is impacted by freshwater wetlands and transition area to the rear of the side, and a flood hazard area to the rear of the property and backside of the structure. County Engineering will need to review stormwater management for compliance with County Development Standards.

Mr. Vitz noted that there are homes close to the corner of Comly Road and Main Street that will be torn down as a part of this project. This will greatly increase the site distance and be an improvement for the intersection. Mr. Barilla explained to the Board that the Land Development Review Committee chose to present this site plan because it is an example of what they are seeing throughout the County. Older strip mall developments from the 1950s and 60s are being refurbished and improved to accommodate the growing population.

Mr. Happer made a motion to approve the Report of Actions Taken on Development Plans for June 2025. Mr. Falco seconded the motion, and it was approved by roll call vote.

ROLL CALL

VOTE	Aye	Nay	Abstain
Tayfun Selen, Commissioner Director			
Stephen Shaw, Commissioner	X		
Thomas Mastrangelo, Commissioner Alt.			
Steve Rattner, Chairman	X		
Isobel Olcott, Vice Chair	X		
Nita Galate, Secretary			
Everton Scott			
Daniel Happer	X		
Gregory Johnsen	X		
Joseph Falco, Alt.1	X		
Michael Cortese, Alt.2			
Christopher Vitz, County Engineer	X		
Roslyn Khurdan, (County Engineer Alt)			

Legislative and Municipal

Recent Legislation - Mr. Soriano noted that there were many new pieces of legislation introduced this month, including four farmland preservation appropriation Bills, open space appropriation Bills, energy-related Bills, and Bills related to economic development. Mr. Soriano highlighted Senate Bill S4349, which would require municipal governing bodies to consider preservation of certain open space proposed for development. Upon receipt of an application or project, 20 acres or larger, the administrative officer must inform the governing body, and the body must consider whether to preserve the property for recreation or conservation within 45 days of the application. He also highlighted Assembly Bill A5672, which establishes an abandoned mine reclamation program in the Department of Environmental Protection. This Bill would direct the DEP to develop a state-wide plan for the reclamation of the mines, begin implementing the plan, and either begin carrying out projects themselves or grant money to municipalities and private landowners to carry out projects. Under this Bill they can establish an abandoned mine reclamation program fund with the DEP as a depository for federal or state funds as available. Mr. Soriano reported on Assembly Bill A5694, which would require underground structural assessment prior to commencing public highway or public transportation projects near operating or retired mines.

Master Plan & Land Use Ordinance Monthly Reports – Mr. Soriano reported that the Office of Planning and Preservation received 14 master plans. Of the 14 plans, 12 were Housing Elements and Fair Share plans to address the new fourth round housing obligations, which must be adopted by June 30th. The two plans that were not housing elements were Mountain Lakes' Highlands Element, which incorporates the Highlands goals, policies and standards into the master plan, and Mount Arlington's Reexamination Report, which focuses primarily on the need for a new housing element to address the fourth-round housing obligations.

Mr. Soriano then focused on the 12 Housing Elements and Fair Share Plans. He reported that most of the municipalities have a lower Prospective Need than what was originally suggested by the

DCA, and most conducted analyses that found errors with the DCA's findings. Mr. Soriano also explained that most municipalities are utilizing the Realistic Development Potential (RDP) analysis, which reviews the suitability of vacant land to determine the amount of affordable housing that can be addressed with inclusionary development. Using this analysis, some municipalities are coming up with very low figures related to RDP, resulting in greater reliance on redevelopment. He then explained that when it came to the Present/Rehabilitation Need, many municipalities indicated that they would work with, or continue to work with, the Morris County Community Development Program. The deadline for filing challenges to any adopted plans is August 31st and by March 15th of 2026, the fourth-round process should be complete.

Mr. Sitlick reported on the May Land Use Ordinance Monthly Report, stating that the Office of Planning and Preservation processed a total of eight ordinances, including three proposed and five adopted. He focused on Mount Olive Ordinance 12-2025, which will permit an affordable housing overlay district at the Village Green Shopping Center on Route 46. Age-restricted and multi-family dwelling units may be developed with an affordable set-aside and a maximum of 80 units.

Long Range Planning

State Plan Update – Mr. Soriano reported that the county CART has been submitted, and three meetings have been scheduled for the negotiation portion of the cross-acceptance process. There was a meeting on Monday, June 19th with the Office of Planning Advocacy to discuss the negotiation sessions that are going to be held on July 1st and July 29th. Municipal representatives have been invited to these sessions and some municipal representatives have responded that they will be attending the first one. Mr. Soriano then reported that East Hanover was the only municipality to comment on the goals and priorities of the State Plan. Five of the eleven municipalities that the County is the Negotiating Entity for requested map changes. He explained that statewide, the most requested changes to the State Plan deal with the mapping of Planning Areas. Due to the anticipated amount of map changes, and changes to the planning area criteria, the State is now looking to adopt the Plan this year without having a final map completed. The goal is to adopt a State Plan that has the criteria and changes that are necessary and then move on to a second phase in 2026 that involves the creation of a map. Mr. Soriano explained that after the July negotiation sessions, the OPA will define areas of agreement and disagreement, take their recommendations back to the State Planning Commission, edits will be made to the Plan, and then a series of six public hearings will be held throughout the state to present the final draft. One of the hearings will be held in Morris County on October 9th at 5:00 P.M. at the Public Safety Training Academy. The final step in the process will be the likely adoption of the State Plan without a map.

Mr. Falco asked Mr. Soriano to clarify what exactly the map shows and what are some examples of the criteria that determine the various planning areas. Mr. Soriano gave an explanation to the Board.

Data and Statistics Update – Mr. Sitlick gave a detailed presentation on recent data and statistics for Morris County. A sample of key findings include the following:

- Morris County's population increased by 5,315 or 1% from 2023 to 2024, to 523,053. New Jersey's population increased by 1.3% during the same period.
- Morris County's total housing units increased by 1,553 or 0.8% from 2023 to 2024, with a current total of 201,598. Total housing units increased by 0.4% in New Jersey during the same period.
- Birth counts in Morris County have decreased 3.6% from 2022 to 2023. New Jersey's birth counts decreased by 1.8% during the same period. Despite the downturn, births in 2023 were higher than they have been for most of the past decade.
- Total enrollment in Morris County school districts was 73,095.5 in Fall 2024, down 238 or 0.3% from Fall 2023.
- The top four employers in Morris County are Barclays, Novartis, Picatinny Arsenal, and Atlantic Health System at the top with 10,581 full-time employees.

Mr. Sitlick noted that the information in the presentation has been posted to the Office of Planning and Preservation's 'Data and Statistics' section of the website. Commissioner Shaw commented on his role in an advocacy group that brings awareness to the important work that Picatinny Arsenal does both regionally and in Morris County, especially as the County's second largest employer.

LIASION REPORTS

Lake Hopatcong Commission

Mr. Barilla noted that the aeration system was previously discussed during his Director's Report.

Lake Musconetcong Regional Planning Board / Musconetcong River Management Council and Musconetcong Watershed Association

Chairman Rattner reported that Lake Musconetcong is having difficulty finding suitable locations to dump the material collected during weed harvesting. He also noted that the Musconetcong River Management Council has been working on establishing future goals and creating a plan to connect river tourism with local businesses. Finally, Chairman Rattner reported that the Musconetcong River Management Council and Watershed Association will be hosting environmental day camps this summer for five weeks.

Morris County Open Space Trust Fund

Mr. Barilla reported that three applications were received for the 2025 grant cycle.

Trail Construction Trust Fund Committee

Vice-Chairman Olcott reported that the application period is closed, and staff are meeting with applicants. Any revisions to original applications will be due by August 1st. The Committee will be meeting in the Fall to review the applications.

CORRESPONDENCE AND REPORTS RECEIVED

Mr. Barilla had nothing further to report.

REPORT OF MEETINGS

Mr. Barilla reported that several Planning and Preservation staff members attended the annual New Jersey Planning Association's New Jersey Future Planning Conference. It was a three-day conference with two days conducted virtually and the final day held in New Brunswick.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no business to discuss.

GENERAL COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on July 17, 2025.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:51 pm, Mr. Vitz moved to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Shaw seconded the motion. All approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Barilla", written in a cursive style.

Joseph Barilla, P.P./AICP
Planning Director

Original was signed and is on file at the office of the Morris County Planning Board.

