

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

30 Schuyler Place
March 19, 2026

Morristown
New Jersey

Meeting Held In-Person and Via WebEx

Chairman Rattner called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:48 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 Director Stephen Shaw	Joseph Barilla, Director, Planning and Preservation
Steve Rattner, Chairman	Virginia Michelin, Assistant Director, Planning and Preservation
Isobel Olcott, Vice-Chair	Staci L. Santucci, Esq., County Counsel
Nita Galate, Secretary	Anthony Soriano, Supervising Planner
Everton Scott	Kevin Sitlick, Senior Planner
Gregory Johnsen	Mike DiGiulio, Senior Planner
Michael Cortese, Alternate #1	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 February 19, 2026. Mr. Scott seconded the motion. The motion was approved by roll call vote.

ROLL CALL

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director's Report for February 2026 was reviewed and accepted by the Board and will be placed on file.

REPORT OF FUNDS RECEIVED

Funds received for February 2026 were \$3,775.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Environmental and Watershed

County Wastewater Management Plan – Mr. Barilla reported that Long Hill Township has received and reviewed its municipal Wastewater Management Plan chapter. Staff is working on a county summary of the chapter and mapping. Once all documents are complete, they will be submitted to the NJ Department of Environmental Protection. Mr. Barilla also reported that the County Planners Association has a meeting scheduled with the DEP regarding how the Highlands Council and the DEP will be working together on municipal Wastewater Management Chapters for the Highlands conforming municipalities. Currently the Highlands Council does not want to work on the municipal WMP chapters and believes they should be completed by individual municipalities and counties.

County Watershed Activities – Mr. Barilla reported that there will be a Whippany River watershed cleanup on Saturday, March 21. He also noted that there has been no further information on any projects from the Whippany River watershed or Rockaway River Coalition.

Land Subdivision and Zoning

Developments Reviewed – Vice-Chairman Olcott highlighted the following item from the Land Development Review Committee meeting held on March 18, 2026.

Mt. Arlington, Knolls Subdivision, 2026-26-2-P-0 (CR 616)

This site plan is located on Lake Hopatcong and concerns a five-lot subdivision on 3.5 acres. Four single-family lots will be created, with the remainder of the existing lot encompassing a beach area for the lake. Stormwater management entails the use of drywell systems for each home and an underground infiltration basin for the roadway and parking improvements. County Engineering will review stormwater management for compliance with County Land Development Standards. DEP permitting will most likely be required due to the proximity to Lake Hopatcong and the size of the project.

Vice-Chairman Olcott made a motion to approve the Report of Actions Taken on Development Plans for February 2026. Mr. Johnsen seconded the motion, and it was approved by roll call vote.

ROLL CALL

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

Legislative and Municipal

Recent Legislation - Mr. Soriano reported on several newly introduced bills, the first being Senate Bill S3708 which would provide a 50% sales and use tax exemption for certain businesses in impacted municipalities during ongoing public highway projects. He also reported on Assembly Bill A4508 which would require the Department of Community Affairs to conduct a study quantifying market impact of DCA housing regulations on the housing market for renters and homebuyers. The focus of the study would be on costs due to permitting delays. He then reported on Senate Bill S3611 which would amend the Municipal Land Use Law and direct local planning boards to submit certain data center development plans to the Board of Public Utilities and the

State Planning Commission. The Bill would also require State Planning Commission approval for any data center development.

Master Plan & Land Use Ordinance Monthly Reports – Mr. Soriano reported that the Office of Planning and Preservation received one Reexamination Report from Mine Hill, and 12 amended Housing Element and Fair Share Plans from the Town of Boonton, Boonton Township, Hanover, East Hanover, Mendham Borough, Mendham Township, Mine Hill, Montville, Morris Plains, Netcong, Parsippany and Rockaway Borough. He explained that these plans were in addition to the eight plans received last month.

The Mine Hill Reexamination Report notes changes that must be made to the Master Plan in association with their settlement with the Fair Share Housing Center. Mr. Soriano noted that Housing Element amendments are the result of challenges brought by the Fair Share Housing Center and developers to plans originally adopted in 2025 in accordance with the process set by the state for the Affordable Housing Dispute Resolution Program. Towns were required to adopt plans last year based on the state schedule, but the Dispute Program permitted subsequent challenges to the plans which are just now being memorialized in amended Housing Elements.

Chairman Rattner asked Mr. Soriano a question about the figures included in the Town of Boonton's amended housing plan. Mr. Soriano responded that the municipality has not fully settled in court and still retains the right to appeal. Therefore, the numbers included in their plan may be lower if they win their appeal.

Mr. Sitlick reported on the February Land Use Ordinance Monthly Report, stating that the Office of Planning and Preservation processed 91 proposed and eight adopted ordinances. He highlighted Parsippany-Troy Hills ordinance 2026:08, which rezones the site of the Morris Hills Shopping Center on Route 46 and allows a mixed-use inclusionary district with multi-family and commercial uses in separate buildings. There will be a 20% affordable set aside and a maximum unit total of 390. Mr. Sitlick also reported on Florham Park ordinance 26-04, which establishes an overlay district at Farleigh Dickinson University that allows the construction of inclusionary residential housing anywhere on the tract on up to 50% of the tract area. The permitted dwelling types include attached or multi-family dwelling units; age-restricted dwelling units, with any affordable units within the same lot or tract being non-age-restricted; mixed-use buildings with first floor retail sales or services; and single-family dwellings. The maximum unit total is 780.

Long Range Planning

U.S. Census American Communities Survey Update – Mr. Sitlick presented a PowerPoint summary of statistics for Morris County based on the recent release of municipal level U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year sampling data. Topics discussed included median housing values, median contract rents, median household income, poverty rates, and work from home status. Mr. Sitlick identified the top five and bottom five municipalities in each topic category and presented maps illustrating changes in topic conditions county-wide. Mr. Sitlick noted that the information is based on sampling data which often includes significant margins of

error, therefore some extreme changes should be viewed with consideration of these margins of error. He noted that the statistics summarized in the presentation have been uploaded to the Data and Statistics section of the Office of Planning and Preservation website.

State Plan Update – Mr. Soriano reported that two meetings were held with Office of Planning Advocacy staff and county representatives to discuss two potential Special Resource Areas identified by commenters during the cross-acceptance process. He explained that the State Plan defines a Special Resource Area as an area or region with unique characteristics or resources of statewide importance, which are essential to the sustained wellbeing and function of its own region and other regions or systems (environmental, economic, and social).

The first meeting was held on March 4th and concerned the Skylands Region. Currently there is no specifically defined geographic location for this region, other than a general determination by the NJ Department of Tourism. The area would generally include northwest New Jersey encompassing Morris, Somerset, Hunterdon, Warren and Sussex counties. Mr. Soriano reported that the meeting included members of these counties as well as members of the Highlands Council staff. He explained that the Highlands was originally designated as a Special Resource Area in the 2001 State Plan, which led to the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act and the creation of the Highlands Council. OPA staff wanted to know how counties felt about the idea of designating a Special Resource Area for the Skylands. All the counties present at the meeting told the OPA that they do not want to see a new source of regulatory oversight, particularly as much of the area is already overseen by the Highlands Council.

Mr. Soriano reported that a second meeting was held on March 17th regarding a potential “Great Swamp” Special Resource Area. The meeting was very short and included representatives of the Highlands Council, and Morris and Somerset counties. Both counties indicated that another layer of regulation was not needed and the Highlands agreed. Of the ten water basins feeding the Great Swamp area, all but three are already covered by the Highlands, and the Council does not want to expand. No one present, including the OPA, expressed interest in another overlay of regulation for this area. OPA staff will inform the SPC members of the outcomes of these meetings at the State Planning Commission Meeting on April 1.

Mr. Soriano reported that the mapping component of the State Plan is still being worked on as staff are trying to determine a protocol to address the 1,500 requested map changes. A draft has been created but it is still under review by the Department of the Attorney General to determine whether it meets the State Plan rules regarding map changes.

Director Shaw noted that the Executive Director of the OPA gave a presentation to the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority stating that the staff are working on new standards for warehouses.

LIASION REPORTS

Lake Hopatcong Commission

Mr. Barilla reported that there will be minutes and memos from the Commission posted to the OneDrive folder for next month's meeting. He explained that all the water quality projects around the lake are moving forward but there was no mention of the aeration project, which he assumes has been tabled due to the high cost.

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

Chairman Rattner reported that the Regional Planning Board was able to close out the state grant for the weed harvester.

Morris County Open Space Trust Fund

Mr. Scott reported the Committee will have their reorganization meeting for 2026 on March 30th. He also reported that there was one closing for the Wildcat Ridge Preserve in Rockaway Township.

Trail Construction Trust Fund Committee

Ms. Galate reported that the Committee had its reorganization meeting for 2026 on March 2nd. She also noted that the grant round for this year has now begun and there has been more interest in the program.

CORRESPONDENCE AND REPORTS RECEIVED

Mr. Barilla had nothing further to report.

REPORT OF MEETINGS

Mr. Barilla had nothing further to report.

OTHER BUSINESS

Development Review Annual Report – Mr. Barilla presented highlights from the 2025 Annual Development Activity Report for Morris County, which provides data and statistics about the status of development throughout Morris County. He reported that Parsippany-Troy Hills Township leads the County with 26 new submissions and explained that the trend for the past year continues to be multi-family housing and warehouses. Mr. Barilla then reported that between 2016 and 2025, applications totaling approximately 17,497 units of multi-family housing were reviewed by the Morris County Planning Board. Other key findings from the report:

- Multi-family submittals remained strong and increased to a three-year high of 2,028 units.
- Large-scale, residential and commercial mixed-use developments drastically increased in scope from 2024. The Bayer Mixed-Use Redevelopment is the largest with 176 townhomes, 144 condos, 80 affordable multi-family residential units, a 5-unit group home,

a 123-unit hotel with a 10,000 square foot office and restaurant, and 9,000 square feet of retail.

- Housing affordability continues to be an issue. In 2024, the median new single-family attached home sales price in Morris County was \$773,858, while the median sales price for new single-family detached homes was \$1,012,840.
- Morris County's highly educated and skilled workforce will continue to be a draw for employers. Transportation options, excellent school systems, recreational amenities and safe communities will continue to make Morris County one of the most desirable counties in which to reside in the nation.

Mr. Scott asked Mr. Vitz how traffic is impacted when sites are redeveloped from business to residential. Mr. Vitz responded that in general, the volume of traffic produced by residential sites is lower than what an office would generate. However, the time of day and direction in which the traffic is moving is opposite. Therefore, the engineering department has been required to review the signal timings along county corridors to account for this change.

GENERAL COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public

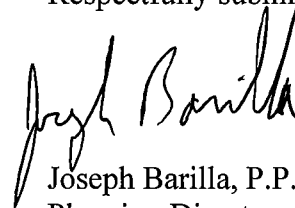
NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on April 16, 2026.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:46 pm, Mr. Vitz moved to adjourn the meeting and Commissioner Director Shaw seconded the motion. All approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Joseph Barilla, P.P./AICP
Planning Director

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

