

WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MEETING  
REGULAR MEETING  
February 18, 2026

The Regular meeting of the Planning Board was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chairman Karp in Meeting Room A in the Municipal Building.

**STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE**

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, a notice of this meeting's date, time, location, and agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the township bulletin board, and filed with the Municipal Clerk on February 6, 2026.

**ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

Michael Karp, Chairman, Class IV

Curtis Hoberman, Vice-Chairman, Class IV

Hemant Marathe, Mayor, Class I

Councilwoman Geevers, Class III

Sue Appelget, Class IV

Jyotika Bahree, Class II

Robert Loverro, Alt. #1

Pankaj Patel, Alt. #2

ABSENT: Simon Pankove, Class IV

Allen Schectel, Class IV

Anis Baig, Class IV

Mr. Loverro entered the meeting at 6:32PM

**TOWNSHIP CONSULTANT STAFF PRESENT**

Gerald Muller, Esq., Attorney, Muller & Baillie, P.C

David Novak, PP, Planner, Burgis & Associates

Sam Surtees, Land Use Manager and Zoning Officer

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chairman Karp opened the meeting for public comment on non-agenda and non-pending items. There were no comments from the public.

**MINUTES**

January 21, 2026

Vice Chairman Hoberman made a motion to approve the January 21, 2026 minutes; seconded by Mayor Marathe. Approved by Voice Vote.

Abstention(s): Appelget, Bahree

January 21, 2026 (Closed Session)

Mayor Marathe made a motion to approve the January 21, 2026 Closed Session minutes with amendment; seconded by Councilwoman Geevers. Approved by Voice Vote.

Abstention(s): Appelget, Bahree

**LIAISON REPORT(S):**

Affordable Housing Committee:

Ms. Bahree reported that at the February 12, 2026 Affordable Housing meeting, a discussion on the Managed Natural Landscape Draft Ordinance continued. One member gave an interesting presentation about using technology to monitor snow removal operations. A soft copy was shared with the Affordable Housing Committee and forwarded to the board for anyone interested.

**ORDINANCE REFERRALS FROM THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL**

- a) Ordinance 2026-02 B-2A District (Neighborhood Business)
- b) Ordinance 2026-03 R-5E District (Affordable Housing)
- c) Ordinance 2026-04 R-5F District (Affordable Housing)
- d) Ordinance 2026-05 R-5G District (Affordable Housing)
- e) Ordinance 2026-06 R-5H District (Affordable Housing)
- f) Ordinance 2026-07 R-5I District (Affordable Housing)
- g) Ordinance 2026-08 R-5J District (Affordable Housing)
- h) Ordinance 2026-09 RP-7A & RP-7B District (Affordable Housing)

Attorney Muller explained that the Township Council had introduced several ordinances, which have now been sent to the Planning Board to assess their consistency with the Master Plan. If the Planning Board finds them consistent, the ordinances will return to the Township Council for a second reading. The council will entertain any comments from the members of the public who wish to speak on these ordinances. Tonight, the Planning Board will not be reviewing any concept plans or site plans just whether these ordinances are consistent with the Master Plan.

Township Planner Novak was sworn in by Attorney Muller.

Township Planner Novak introduced himself and explained that tonight he will be going through the ordinances that are on the agenda and be giving a brief description of each of them. He began with Ordinance 2026-02 which is the B-2A district. He explained that the township had adopted a new zoning ordinance a few years ago that in part permitted drive-through restaurants and car washes as an accessory use to a gasoline service station in that area. After that there was a site plan that was approved for a QuickChek. It was a preliminary and final site plan as well as a preliminary site plan for a drive-through restaurant, but the drive-through restaurant is no longer being built. There is a draft ordinance that's been prepared that modifies the use and bulk regulations of that district. It adds car washes as permitted use as opposed to being just an accessory use, queuing for car washes as well as an adjustment to accessory structures for car washes, specifically the vacuums. The 2020 Land Use Element Plan encouraged retail and commercial development, which would be appropriate for that area. It didn't identify car washes as a primary use, but it still identified car washes as a use in the area.

Attorney Muller indicated that the remaining ordinances are referred to as affordable housing. These ordinances serve to implement the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan for the fourth round. There is a specific timeframe

governing the fourth round, and adoption of these ordinances is required by March 15, 2026. He noted that a program was developed to provide in excess of the 480 credits that were assigned for a total of 507 credits—which are not all units. They were able to attain these credits for various reasons, with the actual number of affordable units being 411.

Chairman Karp further clarified that this is all part of the settlement agreement with Fair Share Housing. As a result of this agreement, the originally proposed number of units was reduced. Planner Novak added that while an initial allocation of 661 was assigned to the municipality, a complicated adjustment process brought the requirement down to 480. The March 15, 2026 deadline is mandated by both the settlement agreement and the State of New Jersey. Municipalities failing to meet this deadline may risk losing immunity from builder remedy litigation.

Mayor Marthe noted the town had little control over the number assigned to them. He explained that none of these properties are zoned residential. The court and Fair Share Housing Center are requiring residential zoning under pressure, and they need to find somewhere to put these units. The town sought all available bonus credits to help. Chairman Karp called this the best possible outcome given the circumstances.

Planner Novak explained that Ordinances 26-03 to 26-09 pertain to affordable housing, including all ordinances and rezoning within both the settlement agreement and Housing Element and Fair Share Plan. He summarized each ordinance, site locations, and potential affordable units and bonus credits—totaling 411 units and 96 bonus credits for a total of 507 affordable housing credits. The town's fourth round obligation is 480 credits, which they will exceed. Noting past changes in unit counts during the third round, Mr. Novak stressed the value of flexibility for future adjustments. Ms. Bahree asked if unused bonus credits could roll over to the next round, and Councilwoman Geevers requested the attorney consult with Fair Share Housing Center about applying excess credits in the fifth round. Attorney Muller replied it's too early to determine but can be revisited closer to the next round.

Chairman Karp opened the meeting for public comment on Ordinances 2026-02 through 2026-09.

Attorney Muller swore in all speakers.

DEBRA MARGULIES, 149 Tunicflower Lane: She expressed concern that the car wash ordinance alters the Master Plan in the B-2A district. She opposes a standalone full-service car wash, believing it is out of character for the area and could lower nearby property values. She went on record opposing this proposed change.

TIRZA WAHRMAN, 5 Stonelea Drive: She expressed her opposition to changing the B-2A district ordinance, which would allow a second car wash in town. She noted that even as an accessory use, it presents issues, citing her environmental background and concerns about increased traffic, air pollution from idling, and stormwater runoff. She argued this change is inconsistent with the Master Plan and advocated for rejecting the ordinance.

AJAY TOMAR, 6 Horace Court: He voiced his concerns about the car wash ordinance, stating that the Land Use Plan permits a car wash only as an accessory use to gas stations—not as a standalone business. Approving it without updating the Master Plan could expose the township to litigation, which he is ready to pursue on behalf of his neighborhood if necessary. In closing he stated that if the administration wants to change the Master Plan they can, but don't sneak it into the ordinance.

West Windsor Township Planning Board  
Regular Meeting Minutes February 18, 2026

KEVIN RANALLO, 106 Harris Road: He addressed the car wash ordinance, questioning how it fits into the current Master Plan. The property is governed by this plan, which allows a car wash only as an accessory use; this proposal would make it a primary use. He wanted to know how this is consistent with the intent and objectives of the existing Master Plan.

Chairman Karp asked for a motion to close the public hearing; motion to approve by Mayor Marathe; seconded by Ms. Bahree. Passed by Voice Vote.

Mayor Marthe stated he wanted to speak about the B-2A district, acknowledging it is the current topic of discussion. He clarified that the proposed ordinance is necessary because the owner of QuickChek and the owner of the car wash are different. If QuickChek were to buy the car wash and reconstruct it at the same location, this would qualify as an accessory use under the same ownership, and the ordinance would not be required. He explained concerns were raised about traffic, he stated the location is on Route 571 which is a busy road and he feels this would not increase the volume in that area. Regarding residential proximity, Mayor Marthe emphasized that there is no nearby housing, as a field separates the car wash from the closest house. For the record, he mentioned that a developer previously proposed building a warehouse at this site, which he declined. Although a restaurant was approved for the area, the developer was unable to secure a tenant, and they ultimately identified a reputable company interested in building a car wash. Mayor Marthe also addressed a question about tax revenue, stating he could not confirm whether a restaurant would generate more revenue than a car wash; however, either would contribute more than what they are collecting now, which is zero. He noted that the developer would be removing the unsightly structures that have been an eyesore for forty years. He stated that this is a legitimate business and questioned if opposition stemmed from political motives, given repeated objections to whatever he proposes. He stated that the Zoning Board approved a car wash on that corner requested by the owner of the Valero property, that was never built, but that was before his time, and nobody complained about it. He added that if the owner of the Valero station decides to build a car wash next to the station now, there's nothing anyone could do because that would be an accessory use.

Chairman Karp explained that a QuickChek store with an attached gas station is being constructed at the site; however, since the neighboring car wash will have a different owner, this ordinance is needed. If you weren't aware of the separate ownership of the QuickChek and car wash, the arrangement might appear as though the car wash is an accessory use because they are right next to each other. Mr. Surtees noted that QuickChek and the car wash will share a parking lot, and access to the car wash will be through QuickChek.

Councilwoman Geevers inquired about the appearance of the car wash. Planner Novak responded that, without getting into site plan specifics, the design standards of the B-2A district would remain unchanged. He added that they encourage using brick façades to match McCaffrey's across the street, as well as the CVS on the other side. The same recommendation was made during the Planning Board review of QuickChek.

Vice Chairman Hoberman asked Mr. Novak how having an independent car wash fits with the neighborhood development goals of the B-2A district. Mr. Novak provided background on the B-2A district, stating it originated from the 2020 Land Use Plan as an offshoot of the B2 district, which includes McCaffrey's Shopping Center and Southfield Shopping Center—collectively known as the neighborhood center business district. The intent of the B-2A district was to replace the underlying zoning in that area. The corner being discussed holds the QuickChek, a dentist office and this proposed car wash as well as the gas station which is caddy corner from there. They were previously located in both the residential district, the R-1C district as well as the P-1 district, which is an

office district that no longer exists. The office zoning there as well as the residential zoning didn't really match what was in the surrounding character as well as encompassing those areas as well. The primary goal for the district is to promote suitable commercial and retail development fitting for that intersection and its surroundings. The district was originally created with small scale shops in mind. Zoning doesn't dictate who operates these businesses but focuses on limiting the size of buildings. Permitted uses include offices, eateries, banks, drive-through fast food, memory care facilities, gas stations with convenience stores, medical/professional offices, and standalone mortuaries (not permitted), while car washes are only listed as accessory uses. These allowed uses are considered small scale in size and layout, serving the corridor and supporting the area's predominantly commercial character. While a car wash is not listed in the Master Plan as a principal use in B-2A, there are other auto-related permitted businesses like gas stations and drive-through fast food establishments. The board is looking at whether this ordinance is not inconsistent with the intent of the Master Plan to develop that area with small scale commercial uses that can complement the corridor.

Chairman Karp inquired whether, in the scenario where a gas station and convenience store are located on one corner and a standalone car wash operated by a different owner is situated on another corner, would qualify as an accessory use given the distance between them. He expressed with that scenario, concerns about classifying the car wash as an accessory use to the gas station due to their physical separation. He emphasized that although there may be two different owners of the QuickChek and car wash, the proximity and shared parking lot between them substantiate considering the car wash as an accessory use even with a different owner. Mr. Novak noted that when determining if something constitutes an accessory use, key considerations include whether it supports and is incidental to the principal use, as well as the overall site integration.

Mr. Loverro spoke about the importance of discussing car washing, as several states at a municipal level have banned home car washing due to environmental concerns. He mentioned that more car washes may appear in townships.

Councilwoman Geevers noted a threat of litigation and wanted assurance that the ordinance is in compliance with the Master Plan. Attorney Muller concurred with Planner Novak and stated he believes it is. Chairman Karp explained the businesses are side by side, so it meets the criteria for site integration and its complimentary use, being a car wash and a gas station.

Mr. Novak explained that when discussing the B-2A district and the 2020 Land Use Plan, it's not only about permitted uses, but also about achieving specific goals for that category—such as development and redevelopment of properties, providing buffers and landscaping, integrating parking and signage, and promoting lot consolidation to create a more cohesive design. These are the objectives of the B-2A district. He clarified that consistency means aligning not just with the allowed uses, but also with what the district aims to accomplish. Councilwoman Geevers asked Mr. Novak whether he believes this complies with the Master Plan. Mr. Novak responded that, according to the Municipal Land Use Law, this is not inconsistent with the intent of the plan.

Chairman Karp asked for a motion to approve that Ordinances 2026 -03 through 2026-09 are consistent with the Master Plan and will be sent back to the Township Council. Motion to approve by Mayor Marthe; seconded by Vice Chairman Hoberman.

Roll Call:

Aye: Patel, Loverro, Bahree, Appelget, Geevers, Marathe, Hoberman, Karp

Nay: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Schectel, Pankove, Baig

West Windsor Township Planning Board  
Regular Meeting Minutes February 18, 2026

Chairman Karp asked for a motion to approve that Ordinance 2026-02 B-2A district is consistent with the Master Plan and will be sent back to the Township Council. Motion to approve by Mayor Marthe; seconded by Ms. Bahree.

Roll Call:

Aye: Patel, Loverro, Bahree, Appelget, Geevers, Marathe, Karp

Nay: Hoberman

Abstain: None

Absent: Schectel, Pankove, Baig

**ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting is scheduled for February 25, 2026

Chairman Karp adjourned the meeting at 7:42 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Van Clef  
Recording Secretary