

WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MEETING  
REGULAR MEETING  
February 4, 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 January 21, 2026.

Jyotika Bahree was reappointed as a Class II Planning Board Member and sworn in by Attorney Muller.

**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  
Anis Baig, Class IV  
Robert Loverro, Alt. I

ABSENT: Simon Pankove, Class IV  
Allen Schectel, Class IV  
Pankaj Patel, Alt. #2

Mr. Baig entered the meeting at 6:34PM.

**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.

Attorney Muller announced that proof of publication is in order and the board has jurisdiction.

Township Planner Novak was sworn in by Attorney Muller.

Township Planner Novak introduced himself and explained that tonight they will be discussing the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan dated January 9, 2026. They adopted a housing plan in June of 2025, and this document will be replacing the prior plan. He gave a brief background on what affordable housing is. He stated that every town must have affordable housing because it is a constitutional obligation determined by the NJ Supreme Court in the 1970s. He explained that affordable housing is broken up into different rounds. The prior round encompasses the years 1987 to 1999, the third round includes the years 1999 to 2025, and the fourth round covers 2025 to 2035. The state adopted new legislation in March of 2024, which in part eliminated the Council of Affordable Housing (COAH) and split its duties

between the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and the Administrative Offices of the Courts (AOC). The DCA was deemed responsible for determining the state and each region's affordable housing numbers. They also calculated each municipality's affordable housing need numbers, but they were non-binding. The AOC established a resolution dispute program which is responsible for handling disputes on municipal need numbers as well as affordable housing plans. They adopted a series of strict deadlines which the town has been meeting. Key deadlines included: January 31, 2025, municipalities had to adopt a resolution establishing its perspective and present need numbers; June 30, 2025, municipalities were required to adopt a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan; August 31, 2025, interested parties had to file an action with the program regarding the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan; and December 31, 2025, municipalities had to address objections by revising their plans or offering explanations to why they couldn't. The final deadline is March 15, 2026, when municipalities must adopt the revised Housing Element and Fair Share Plan and all ordinances to effectuate that housing plan. He added that when the housing plan was adopted in June, several challenges were received from the Fair Share Housing Center, the state's leading nonprofit advocacy group for affordable housing—as well as from multiple developers. Settlements were reached with both the Fair Share Housing Center and several of the developers. In accordance with the settlement agreement, it is now necessary to adopt a new Housing Element and Fair Share Plan and to enact all required ordinances.

Mr. Novak summarized affordable housing obligations: In the prior round (1987–1999), the township met its 899-unit requirement through 674 units and 225 bonus credits. The third round (1999–2025) was based upon a settlement agreement with Fair Share Housing, which set a 1,500-unit obligation. The fourth round (2025–2035), the township was assigned a perspective need of 480 units. They are proposing several different components to address that obligation. The components will produce 411 units plus 96 bonus credits (507 total). Attorney Muller noted the original fourth round obligation was 661 units and they negotiated that down to 480. Mr. Novak went on to say that the obligation of 480 units will be addressed through several different inclusionary components. He then read the list of sites and how many units/credits each site will generate. Attorney Muller added that the latest plan includes more sites and higher density than the June Housing Element and Fair Share Plan. This change was necessary because DCA assigned the township a housing number of 661, whereas the township's own calculations were lower, even below 480. The June plan addressed the lower figure, but when the requirement increased to 480, more sites and higher density were added. Mr. Novak noted some figures that have changed in the third round but added that obligations will still be met. He referenced the chart on page 11 of the housing plan, explaining updates will apply throughout the tables. The W Squared project (formerly Avalon Bay Redevelopment) is now expected to provide 144 affordable units plus 100 bonus credits, totaling 244 credits. This brings the overall total to 1,125 credits with 375 bonus credits, for a combined 1,500 affordable credits in the third round. Edits will be reflected throughout the document. Attorney Muller stated that, although the notice was for the current Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, renotification was unnecessary since the discussed change concerns a third round obligation and is informational only.

Mr. Novak went on to speak about how affordable housing opportunities are being provided not only through new development but also via the spending plan. Several programs support this effort, including the township's rehabilitation and affordability assistance programs, foreclosure and bankruptcy initiatives, a closing cost program for down payment help, a homeowners' association fee fund for affordable units, and a veterans' ownership agency program offering financial or other assistance to qualified veterans.

Attorney Muller referenced forthcoming appendices, which include the administrative ordinances that require adoption. Specifically, these are the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Ordinance, the Affordable Housing Regulations Ordinance, and the Mandatory Set Aside Ordinance. Instead of drafting new ordinances—particularly the comprehensive Affordable Housing Regulations reflecting third round updates—a team of New Jersey affordable housing

experts developed a model ordinance. The town decided to wait for the completion of this ordinance, which has now been received and they are actively reviewing it. The three administrative ordinances have now been merged into a single ordinance, which will be sent to the Township Council for approval. It will then be sent back to the Planning Board to confirm consistency with the Master Plan before returning to the Council for final adoption.

Councilwoman GeEVERS requested her name be added to the Planning Board Members on the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan. She went on to address the chart of fourth round components found on pages 12 and 83, noting that it reflects a township obligation of 480 units comprised of 507 credits. She explained that the two different numbers might be confusing and asked for written clarification to be included in the document. Mr. Novak indicated that additional text could be added, specifying that 411 units plus 96 bonus credits account for a total of 507 credits. Councilwoman GeEVERS also raised concerns about the affordable housing trust fund spending plan document on page 8. She referenced a sentence stating "*The township will bond if needed for any future group home.*" While she acknowledged that bonding for future group homes is not anticipated, she expressed concern regarding the financial commitment involved if bonding were required, given the high cost of housing in West Windsor. Attorney Muller clarified that bonding has traditionally been a requirement, but under the current program, all projects are self-financed and no bonding will occur. Councilwoman GeEVERS requested removal of that sentence. Mr. Novak responded that the opening paragraph indicates that, "in the event of an unexpected revenue shortfall, the township *will approve* a resolution of intent to bond", and thus the final sentence can be deleted. Ms. Appelget recommended revising the wording in that paragraph from "will approve" to "may approve." Mr. Novak noted that these changes will be made along with several minor grammatical errors that do not affect the substance of the document.

Mayor Marathe commented that while the DCA initially gave the town a number of 661 units, including already occupied land, the town's analysis of available land yielded a much lower figure. He explained that Attorney Muller stated earlier they negotiated 480 units. This number was imposed by the judge and there were no negotiations, either accepting 480 or facing a possible 692. The town agreed, anticipating a vacant land analysis would further reduce the number. Although their analysis did indicate a smaller figure, the required density increased from seven units per acre in round three to about twenty in round four based on the judge's new formula. Ultimately, they accepted the imposed number since the revised calculation could have resulted in more than 480 units.

In closing, Mr. Novak complimented the township on its efforts and how they require a 25% set aside, which is a fantastic opportunity to generate affordable housing. This gets people into this community that would otherwise have no means of being able to live here and enjoy the school system, commercial areas and access to the job market in the area. The spending plan programs are robust, and the affordable housing committee is active all the time. West Windsor is a fantastic community, and this is a process that opens this community to more people. Unfortunately, it is a complicated process in determining densities and what goes where and they only have a few months to figure it all out.

Chairman Karp opened the meeting for public comment on Planning Board Resolution 26R-04. There was no public comment.

Councilwoman GeEVERS made a motion to close public comment; seconded by Ms. Bahree. Approved by voice vote.

The board members thanked Mr. Surtees, Mr. Novak and Attorneys Muller and Baillie for all their hard work putting this plan together.

**RESOLUTION(S):**

**PB26-04**

**Adoption of Housing Element & Fair Share Plan for 2025-2035 (Fourth Round)**

Chairman Karp entertained a motion to approve Planning Board Resolution PB26-04, the adoption of the Housing Element & Fair Share Plan for 2025-2035. Motion to approve by Mr. Baig; seconded by Vice Chairman Hoberman.

Roll Call:

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

Abstain: None

Absent: Pankove, Schectel, Patel

**ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting is scheduled for February 18, 2026

Chairman Karp adjourned the meeting at 7:12PM

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Van Clef  
Recording Secretary