

**BOROUGH OF RIVER EDGE
LAND USE BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
ZOOM MEETING
February 11, 2026**

NOTE – Public meetings of the Municipal Land Use Board of the Borough of River Edge will be held in person in the Council Chambers on the second floor of Borough Hall, 705 Kinderkamack Road, River Edge, NJ 07661 unless further notice is provided. Meetings will be held concurrently via ZOOM (Hybrid). Members of the public may attend meetings in person or via ZOOM. To join the ZOOM meeting via smart phone, computer or tablet. The log in information and a link to the meeting will be posted on the Borough’s website at <https://www.riveredgenj.org/landuse>.

Chairman Caslin calls the Meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Roll call:

Mayor Papaleo – Present	Chairman Caslin – Present
Ryan Gibbons – Present	Councilman Glass - Present
Eileen Boland - Present	Mr. Chinigo – Present
Mr. Gautier - Present	Mr. Salva - Excused
Michael Krey - Present	Ms. Levine - Present

ALSO PRESENT: Marina Brown, Esq., Thomas Behrens, Jessica Hall and Lisa Ciavarella

Chairman Caslin acknowledged the passing of Mr. Mehrman with a lovely tribute. Several members of the Board shared their memories and respect for Mr. Mehrman. There was a moment of silence.

OLD BUSINESS:

IAAT Services LLC (Carried on the record from 1/28/26) 41 Grand Avenue Block 1405, Lot 4 Preliminary and Final Site Plan Approval, with Use, Height, and Bulk Variance Relief to construct and operate a Double-Faced “Static” Billboard Sign on a Single Monopole.

The applicant has requested that this matter be carried to 2/25/26 without further notice. Notice that the hearing would be carried was made on the record.

MEMORIALIZATION(S): None

COMPLETENESS REVIEW(S): None

NEW BUSINESS: None

DISCUSSION ITEM(S): (1) New Land Use Clerk – Welcome (2)

SWEARING IN OF NEW APPOINTMENTS: Class III –

Councilmember David Glass - Class 3 member is sworn in by the Mayor (new 1-year term, expires 12/31/2026)

Affordable Housing Compliance & Housing Element and Fair Share Plan Updates

Thomas Behrens addresses the Board speaking regarding the fourth round of the state's Affordable Housing obligations which began in July of 2025 and will last until June 30, 2035. He was last in front of the Board on June 25, 2025, at which time this Board adopted the Borough's 4th round housing element and fair share plan to address its obligations at the time. Mr. Behrens will give the Board an overview of where they are, the process, and changes and updates. He advises that he has been working with the council to resolve some issues which he will explain. He explains the process to the Board up and until this 4th round. Everyone is trying to make sense of this new legislation by virtue of the Fair Housing Act which was amended by the state in March 2024. The State comes up with a statewide obligation what it thinks the state owes from the affordable housing stand point and came up with a number of about 85,000 affordable units state wide. That trickles down to regions and River Edge is in Region 1 then that regional obligation trickles down to municipal obligations. River Edge's assigned municipal obligation from the DCA was 159 units for the 4th round period. By January 31, the Borough complied by accepting the number assigned by the DCA (159). The Borough adopted a housing element fair share plan on June 25, 2025, to address what we knew our numbers to be at that time. Over 420+ municipal plans were challenged, basically any town who adopted a plan was challenged. River Edge has made it through the challenge process, they worked through their issues they had with Fair Share Housing Center who was the sole challenger to River Edge's plan. They worked through the Affordable Housing Dispute Resolution Program which entailed a former Mt. Laurel Judge and a special adjudicator. There were no objectors. They reached a mediation agreement with Fair Share Housing Center which was executed on January 7, 2025. So, at this point River Edge is approaching the March 15, 2026, whereby municipalities must adopt any ordinances. No ordinances have been adopted to date, knowing that there would be this challenge. Mr. Behrens will explain further. He continues to update the Board (speaking very quickly) He is speaking regarding a certification that is needed so a developer cannot come in at will, pick a site and say – it's a constitutional obligation so they are here to do that for the town and by the way we are going to exceed your town's zoning because you haven't done anything. So often times a developer will pick a site that should be two stories, make it four stories and end up with a lot more units than would normally be allowed. Immunity allows municipalities to maintain control over their zoning ordinances. This preserves the town's zoning for the next ten years. He shares on the screen the Fair Share breakdown or the Board to review.

Mr. Behrens gives an overview of the Fair Share obligation. He states the overall goal of this participation was (1) compliance and (2) do it in a way that minimizes impact to the Borough. He gives a brief overview to the Board as to how the 3rd round was addressed. He discusses the compliance plan that got the Borough to 40-unit number. He goes through the best redevelopment sites in the town as far as availability standpoint as well as an impact standpoint. The first St. Peters, then New Bridge Crossing, Johnson Ave., overlay, North Kinderkamack overlay, (he speaks regarding the overlay zones) New Bridge Landing Station, All-1 Overlay Zone, Multifamily & Senior Conditional Use Zone and Mandatory Affordable set aside ordinance. Mr. Behrens speaks regarding St. Peter 23 units of assisted living/senior affordable housing. He goes through each site in more detail for the Board. He states that the Johnson Avenue overlay seems ripe for development. Good for affordable housing. He explains the immunity. The goal was to try to control zoning and minimize the impact of the existing community.

There is discussion between the Board members and Mr. Behrens that goes back and forth for some time about the zoning, development areas, overlay zones etc. A lot of back and forth. Mr. Behrens states that the whole state program was designed to circumvent zoning to essentially fast track housing. The Board discusses immunity. River Edge has immunity now. They need to comply with the upcoming date to continue as they are. The Board talks about the Mt. Laurel doctrine for a bit. Ms. Brown explains the general summary. Mr. Behrens goes through the bullet points of the Mt. Laurel doctrine and how it came about which can be reviewed on the Borough's website. We are now operating under the new 4th Round process which is for the period 2025 to 2035. If you go to the affordable housing page of the Borough's website it has everything detailed there. Ms. Brown states that there will be notices going out, there will be public hearings on the Borough's amendment to the Fair Share Plan in the next few months. Mr. Behrens states that at the February 25, 2025, meeting they will ask the Board to adopt the amended housing plan. They are basically taking the June plan, they are not reinventing the wheel, they are updating the various specific sections without the changes they just discussed. He believes there is one or two changes – changes to the density and how the process has evolved. On February 26, 2026, the Mayor and Council will introduce the various ordinances that have been discussed, March 11th the Board will have an opportunity view for consistency those ordinances and finally on March 12, 2026 will have to adopt those ordinances which will all occur within the March 15th statutory deadline. The Mayor advised that the Borough is under the gun and a quorum is necessary for the next few meetings. Ms. Brown and Mr. Behrens discussed the other things that need to be done going forward later on with regard to this i.e a five-year midpoint review. The Board thanks Mr. Behrens for his time he has given to this.

Motion to adjourn meeting – Mr. Gibbons; Second – Mr. Gautier. 9:00 p.m.