

**MINUTES
PLANNING BOARD
TOWNSHIP OF CHATHAM
OCTOBER 5, 2026**

The Regular Meeting of the Planning Board was called to order by Mr. Kahn at 7:37 P.M.

Adequate notice of the meetings of the Planning Board of the Township of Chatham was given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Notice in the form of a Resolution setting forth the schedule of meetings for the year 2026, and January, 2027 was published in the *Chatham Courier* and the *Morris County Daily Record*, a copy was filed with the Municipal Clerk and a copy was placed on the bulletin board in the main hallway of the Municipal Building.

Roll Call

Answering present to the roll call were Mr. Kahn, Mr. Nikolopoulos, Mrs. Rowland, Mrs. Ewald, Mr. Ankel, Mrs. Stillinger and Mr. Tripp.

Mrs. Foran arrived a few minutes late.

Mr. Shehady, Mrs. Chang, and Mr. Miller were absent.

Also present was Board Engineer John Ruschke and Attorney Kelly Carey in place of Board Attorney Steve Warner.

Minutes

Mrs. Ewald moved to approve the minutes of the July 20, 2026 meeting. Mr. Ankel seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Resolutions

Resolution: PB-26-014

**RESOLUTION 2026-014
DIRECTING THAT MEETINGS OF THE PLANNING BOARD BE BROADCAST ON
THE CHATHAM TOWNSHIP YOU TUBE CHANNEL**

WHEREAS, on October 5, 2026, at a duly noticed and constituted public meeting, the Township of Chatham Planning Board (the "Board") members continued their discussion of the public benefits of providing broader access to its meetings; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Chatham has recording equipment in the Board's regular meeting room and has an established You Tube Channel where Township Committee meetings are broadcast; and

WHEREAS the Board recognizes that its meetings are held at night and it is not always convenient for residents to attend meetings of the Board even though they may be interested in an agenda item; and

WHEREAS the Board desires to have its meetings recorded and broadcast on the Township of Chatham You Tube Channel beginning as soon as can practically be arranged; and

WHEREAS, the Board recognizes that recording and broadcasting of meetings requires equipment and personnel that are subject to technical difficulties and scheduling issues and nothing herein shall require that any particular meeting be recorded or broadcast, and the absence of a recording or broadcasting shall not render any meeting invalid under the Rules of the Board or any law or statute; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board as follows:

Section 1. The foregoing recitals are incorporated herein as if set forth in full;

Section 2. The Board hereby directs that the meetings of the Planning Board be recorded and broadcast on the Chatham You Tube Channel and requests that the Township Committee make the funds and equipment available to provide this service to the residents of the Township.

Section 3. The Recording Secretary of the Board shall forward a copy of this Resolution to the Township Committee.

Mrs. Carey said that the Board had previously discussed having meetings broadcast on the Township's YouTube channel. She noted there were concerns about broadcasting over Zoom. Mrs. Carey further noted that the broadcast will be provided as a service, and the meetings could still proceed if the broadcast is not available. She noted that the broadcasts should not be presented as a guarantee under OPMA.

Mayor Rowland noted that the individual who operates the A/V Booth for Township Committee meetings is available for Planning Board meetings as well.

Mr. Nikolopoulos moved to adopt Resolution PB-26-014 to grant the extension. Mr. Ankel seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Mrs. Foran, Aye; Mr. Kahn, Aye; Mr. Nikolopoulos, Aye; Mrs. Rowland, Aye; Mr. Shehady, Absent; Mrs. Ewald, Aye; Mr. Ankel, Aye; Mrs. Chang, Absent; Mrs. Stillinger, Aye; Mr. Tripp, Aye; Mr. Miller, Absent.

Discussion

2027 Meeting Dates

Mr. LaConte said that he and Mrs. Tsimboukis had reviewed the proposed meeting dates for 2027 to avoid holidays and other conflicts. The meeting schedule would be formally approved at the Reorganization Meeting in January.

Master Plan Re-examination

Mrs. Carey said that the MLUL requires municipalities to conduct a Master Plan Re-examination every ten years. She noted that if a municipality fails to do so, then the zoning ordinance would no longer be presumed to be valid. Mrs. Carey said that the Township has had some updates over the past ten years, and it is now time for a full re-examination.

Mrs. Carey provided a proposed timeline for the Township Planner to conduct a re-examination. She also discussed how Monarch Communities, LLC v. Township of Montville affects master plans.

Mr. Ankel asked if there would be a full rewrite of the Master Plan, or if the existing plan would be updated. Mrs. Carey said that initially the goals and objectives would be reviewed for potential updates. She also said that there may be new issues to address, such as data centers.

Mrs. Carey said that the process would be open and transparent, and would include public hearings. She said that the Master Plan is a planning document designed to guide zoning regulations.

Mr. LaConte asked if the Township Planner would take the lead on updates, or if a subcommittee would be appointed by the Board. Mrs. Carey said a subcommittee may be helpful, and she will check with the Township Planner if that is necessary.

Mrs. Carey said that the goal would be to adopt the Master Plan updates in February. Methods to get word out that the Master Plan Re-examination is taking place were discussed. Mr. Ruschke said that a survey was conducted when the Bikeway Element was prepared. Mr. LaConte asked that the Board Manager be informed when the topic will be discussed so that it can be added to the published agenda.

Mr. Ankel asked if a re-examination is needed when there were updates. Mrs. Carey said that a full re-examination is required despite the updates to individual elements over time.

Mr. Ruschke indicated that the Board should be giving direction to the Planner rather than having the Planner give direction to the Board.

Mr. Nikolopoulos asked if there is a cheat sheet to assist Board members. Mr. Ruschke recommended Board members review the existing Master Plan.

Mr. Kahn moved to authorize the Township Planner to move forward with a Master Plan re-examination. Mr. Ankel seconded the motion.

Roll Call: Mrs. Foran, Aye; Mr. Kahn, Aye; Mr. Nikolopoulos, Aye; Mrs. Rowland, Aye; Mr. Shehady, Absent; Mrs. Ewald, Aye; Mr. Ankel, Aye; Mrs. Chang, Absent; Mrs. Stillinger, Aye; Mr. Tripp, Aye; Mr. Miller, Absent.

Floor Area Ratio

Mrs. Stillinger said that her interest in investigating floor-area ratio regulations is inspired by former Mayor Abbie Fair.

Mr. Kahn asked about materials addressing the Board's prior discussion on floor-area ratio and the decision to not recommend any such regulation. Mr. LaConte said he would send the minutes from those meetings. Mrs. Ewald asked if there was a vote on the matter. Mr. LaConte said that there was not a vote, however the Board opted to not move forward with any recommendations.

Mr. Ruschke commented on floor area ratios that he has seen in effect in other municipalities. He gave an example of how it would impact the R-3 Zone compared with the R-4 Zone, and the R-4 Zone would be disproportionately penalized due to smaller lot sizes. Mr. Ruschke further opined that the maximum width of structures is a bigger issue in the R-4 Zone.

Mrs. Stillinger commented that the Board of Adjustment Chairman has been concerned about the R-4 zone and having people priced out of living in Chatham Township.

Mr. Nikolopoulos asked about the process for submitting questions on this topic.

The Board will discuss the Master Plan and floor-area ratio again at the October 19th meeting.

Mrs. Tsimboukis said she would resend the Board of Adjustment's Annual Report.

Stormwater Video Certification

Mr. Nikolopoulos asked if there is a cheat sheet for the video that Board members were required to watch. Mrs. Carey said that when applications are heard, the applicant's engineer will give testimony on stormwater and Mr. Ruschke's office will give comments in response.

Mrs. Foran moved to adjourn at 9:04 PM. Mr. Nikolopoulos seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Gregory J. LaConte
Planning Board Recording Secretary