

**TOWNSHIP OF CEDAR GROVE
ESSEX COUNTY NEW JERSEY**

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

JANUARY 27, 2025

1. ROLL CALL – OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT BY MAYOR

Mayor Skabich called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

Present: Councilmember Maceri, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Mega, Mayor Skabich

Also Present: Township Manager Zichelli and Township Clerk Forde

Absent: Councilwoman Peterson

Mayor Skabich made the required announcement concerning the Open Public Meetings Act as follows: Adequate notice of this Special Meeting was duly provided to the Verona-Cedar Grove Times and the Star Ledger on January 13, 2025, filed with the Township Clerk, and posted on the public bulletin board in the Municipal Building Lobby in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

2. NEW BUSINESS

- a) To consider a binding resolution accepting the Round 4 Present and Prospective Need Obligations as Calculated by the NJ Department of Community Affairs.

The following resolution had been posted on the bulletin board, and a brief synopsis was given by the Township Clerk:

BINDING RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CEDAR GROVE, ESSEX COUNTY, ACCEPTING THE ROUND 4 PRESENT AND PROSPECTIVE NEED OBLIGATIONS AS CALCULATED BY THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS.

WHEREAS, on March 20, 2024, Governor Murphy signed into law substantial amendments to the New Jersey Fair Housing Act, N.J.S.A. 52:27D-301 to 329 (“FHA”), setting forth the procedures, deadlines, and substantive statutory provisions to be applied by New Jersey municipalities for the period between July of 2025 and July of 2035, commonly referenced as “Round 4;” and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the FHA, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (“DCA”) on October 20, 2024, published its statewide calculations of the present and prospective affordable housing obligations for every New Jersey municipality; and

WHEREAS, per DCA’s calculations, the Township of Cedar Grove’s Round 4 affordable housing obligations are:

- 1) Present (Rehabilitation) Need: 15

2) Prospective (New Construction) Need: 170

WHEREAS, on December 13, 2024, the New Jersey Administrative Office of the Courts issued Directive #14-24 which, among other things, directed municipalities to file a Declaratory Judgment Complaint and Case Information Statement in the New Jersey Superior Court, Law Division, within 48 hours of the adoption of this Binding Resolution; and

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the fact that the Township lacks sufficient vacant and suitable land to fully address a 170-unit Prospective Need, it intends to accept the DCA's calculations and will likely seek a "vacant land adjustment" as a component of its Round 4 Housing Element and Fair Share Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Township also intends to accept the DCA's 15-unit Present Need and will take measures to satisfy said obligation as a part of its ongoing Affordable Housing Rehabilitation Program for the period between 2025 and 2035.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the governing body of the Township of Cedar Grove, County of Essex, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The Township of Cedar Grove hereby accepts and adopts the DCA's "fair share" obligations thereby establishing the Township's Present Need obligation of 15 and its Prospective Need obligation of 170; and
2. The Township's Special Mount Laurel Counsel is directed to file the mandatory Declaratory Judgment Complaint and Case Information Statement in the New Jersey Superior Court, Law Division, within 48 hours of the adoption of this Binding Resolution; and
3. A certified copy of this Binding Resolution shall be immediately forwarded to (a) the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs; (b) the Township's Special Mount Laurel Counsel and Planner, and (c) Fair Share Housing Center; and
4. A true copy of this Binding Resolution shall be posted on the Township's official website within 48 hours of adoption.

The Township Manager reported the Township Attorney recommended the Council hold a special meeting to address this matter before the January 31st deadline. The Township Manager reported this would be the first step regarding the adjustments to be made. The Township Manager explained the Township, along with 28 other towns, was still in litigation.

Mayor Skabich asked if the Township Manager thought more towns would join in the litigation. The Township Manager responded affirmatively.

Deputy Mayor Mega moved adoption of the resolution, seconded by Councilman Zazzali and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Mega, Mayor Skabich
NO: None

ABSENT: Councilwoman Peterson

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Skabich opened this portion of the meeting to anyone wishing to be heard.

There being no one present wishing to be heard, Mayor Skabich closed this portion of the meeting.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Deputy Mayor Mega moved adjournment of the public council meeting, seconded by Councilman Zazzali and passed by the following vote:

AYE: Councilmember Maceri, Zazzali, Deputy Mayor Mega, Mayor Skabich

NO: None

ABSENT: Councilwoman Peterson

The meeting adjourned at 5:03 PM.

MELISSA SKABICH MAYOR

ATTEST:

DALE A. FORDE MUNICIPAL CLERK