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To: Colts Neck Township Governing Body

From: Elizabeth McManus, PP, AICP, LEED AP
Brett Harris, PP, AICP

Re: Public Input Meeting Results
Fourth Round of Affordable Housing

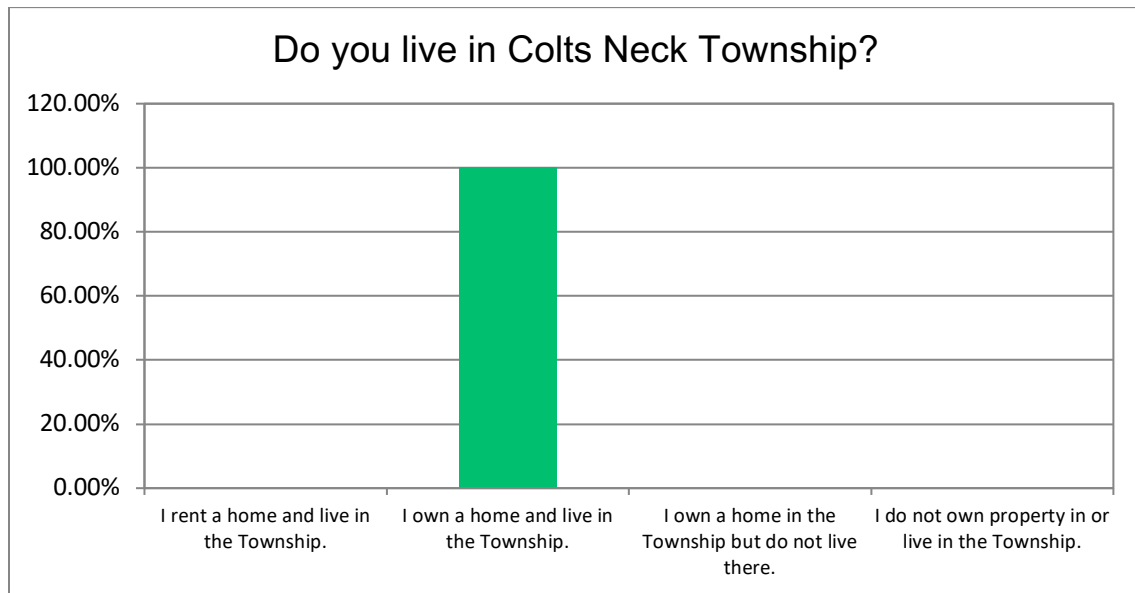
Date: February 25, 2025

The Colts Neck Planning Board hosted a public input meeting on January 14th, at 7:00 pm, at the Conover Road Primary School. As many as 150 people attended some or all of the meeting. The number of responses varied per question, with “Are there certain populations you would like the Township to incorporate into its affordable housing planning? (Choose all that apply.)” receiving the most responses (52) and “What areas of the Township are most appropriate for affordable housing?” receiving the least number of responses (6). The meeting also included a presentation about the March 2024 amendment to the New Jersey Fair Housing Act that set forth a new process for each municipality to meet its fourth-round affordable housing obligation.

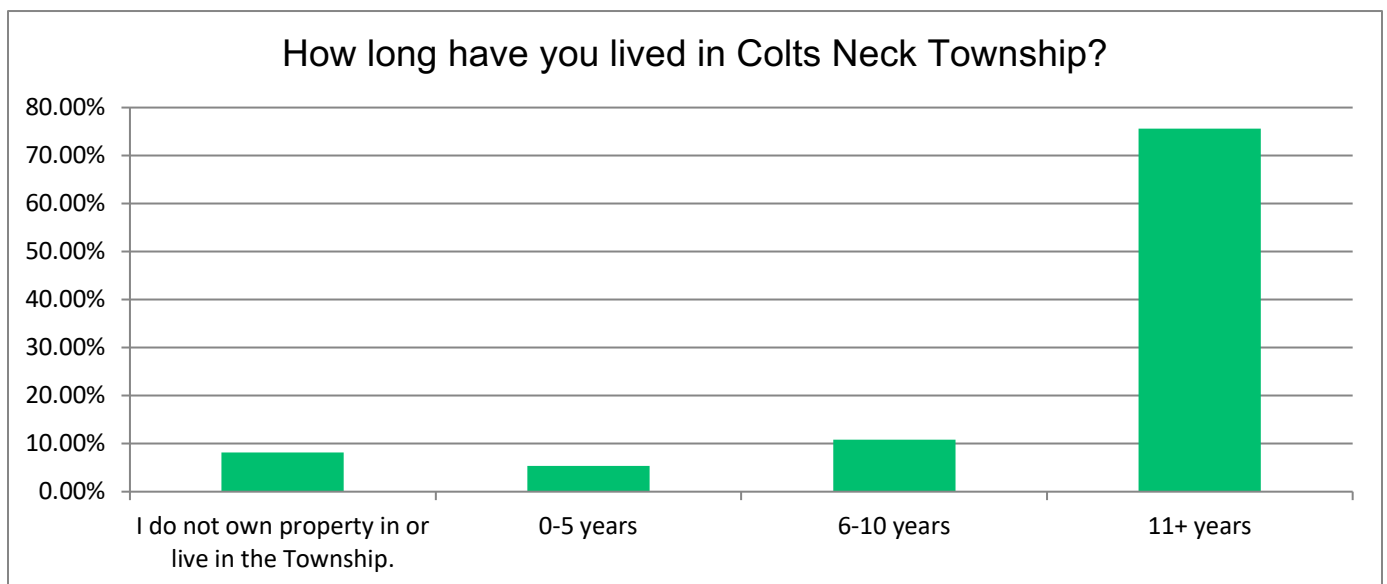
Several stations were provided around the meeting room to solicit input from the public on a variety of questions related to affordable housing in the Township. The input and data received from the public included demographics, locations for development in the Township, types of affordable housing, and thoughts regarding municipal actions related to affordable housing. The public input meeting was one of the Township’s first steps in preparing the Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, which is due to the state no later than June 30, 2025.



The first category of data addresses demographics of those that attended the meeting. The data was collected through “information postcards” which were handed out to each attendee, filled out, and then returned to Township staff. Of the four data points related to demographics, three received 38 responses while one received 37 responses. All 38 respondents noted that they owned a home and lived in the Township.

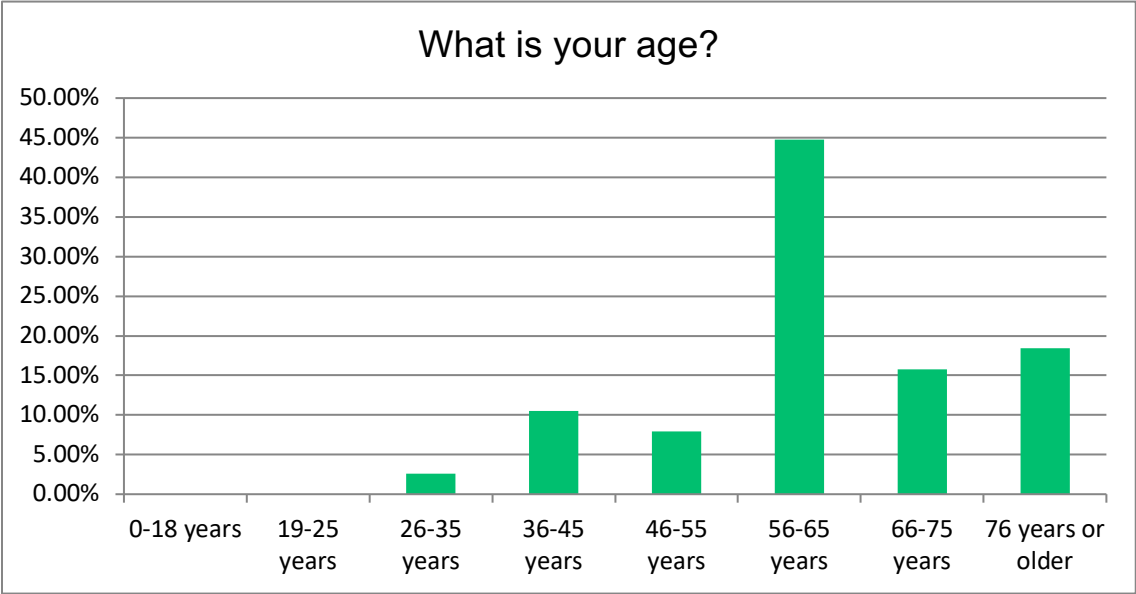


Most respondents, over 75%, noted that they lived in Colts Neck for over 11 years. There may be a discrepancy in the data given 3 people responded that they do not own property in or live in the Township. The previous question notes that the respondents all own a home and live in the Township.

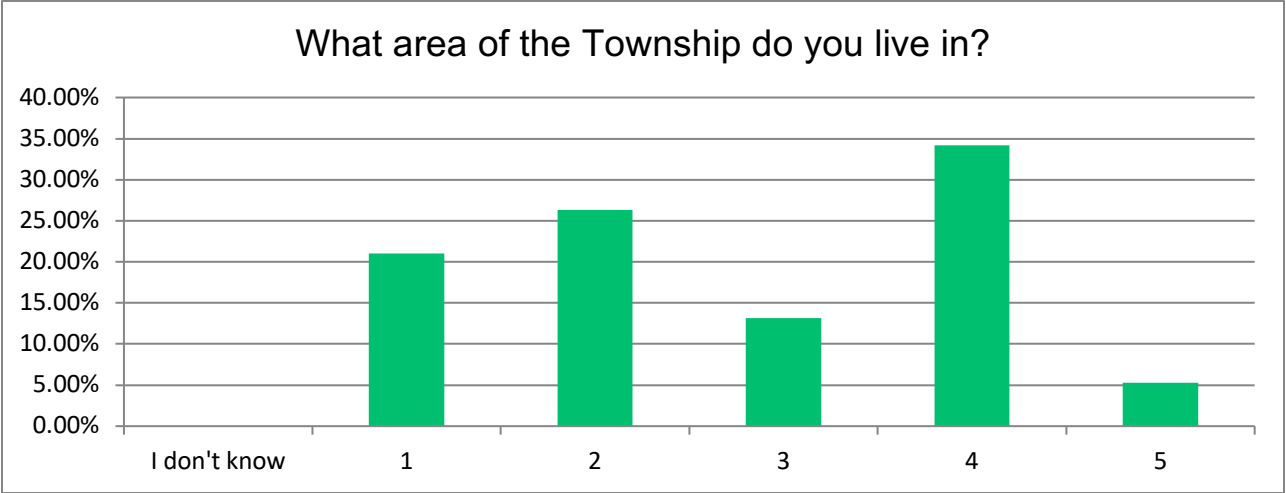




Of the respondents, about 45% were between 56 and 65 years old. Approximately 79% of the respondents were older than 55 years old.

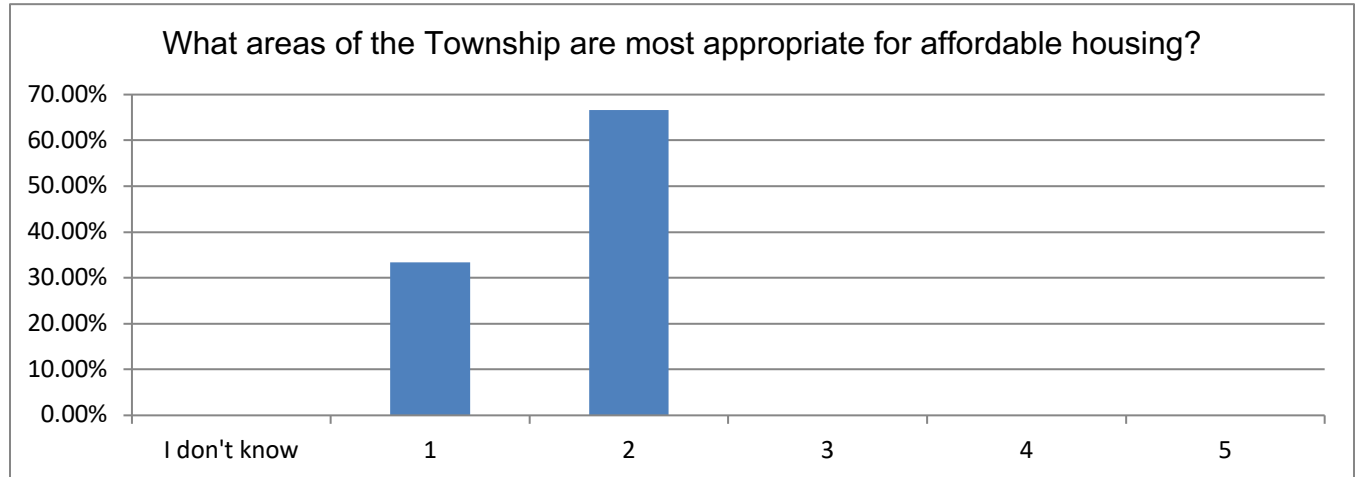


The final demographic data point collected determined what area of the Township people lived in. Please refer to the map attached as an Appendix for reference. About 34% of respondents noted they lived in “Area 4” (the northwestern area of the Township) and about 26% noted they lived in “Area 2” (the southeastern area of the Township).

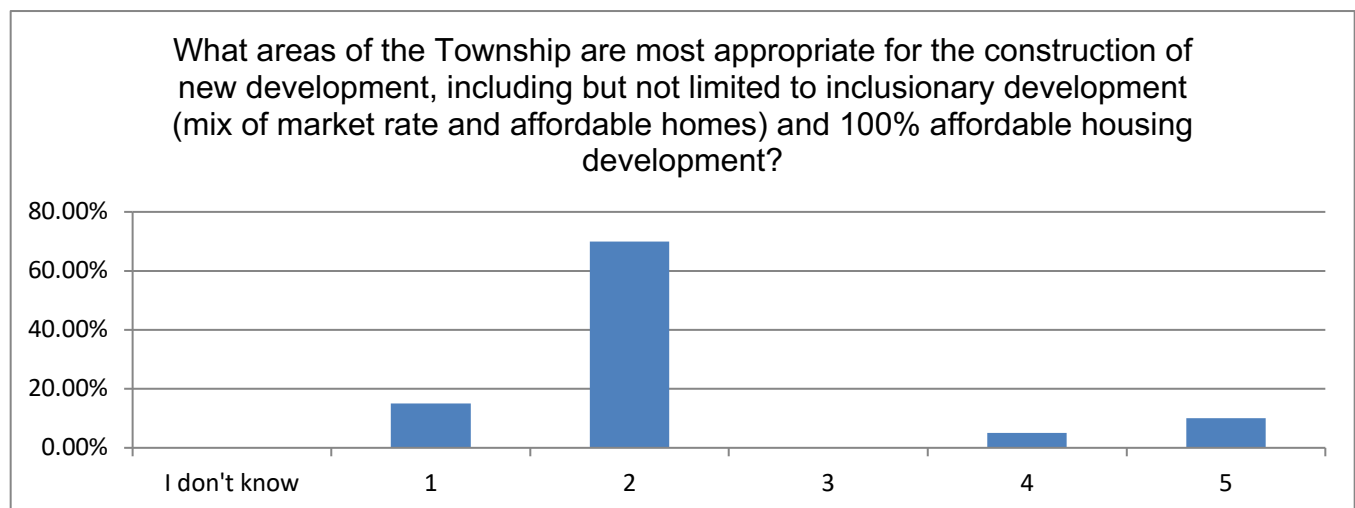




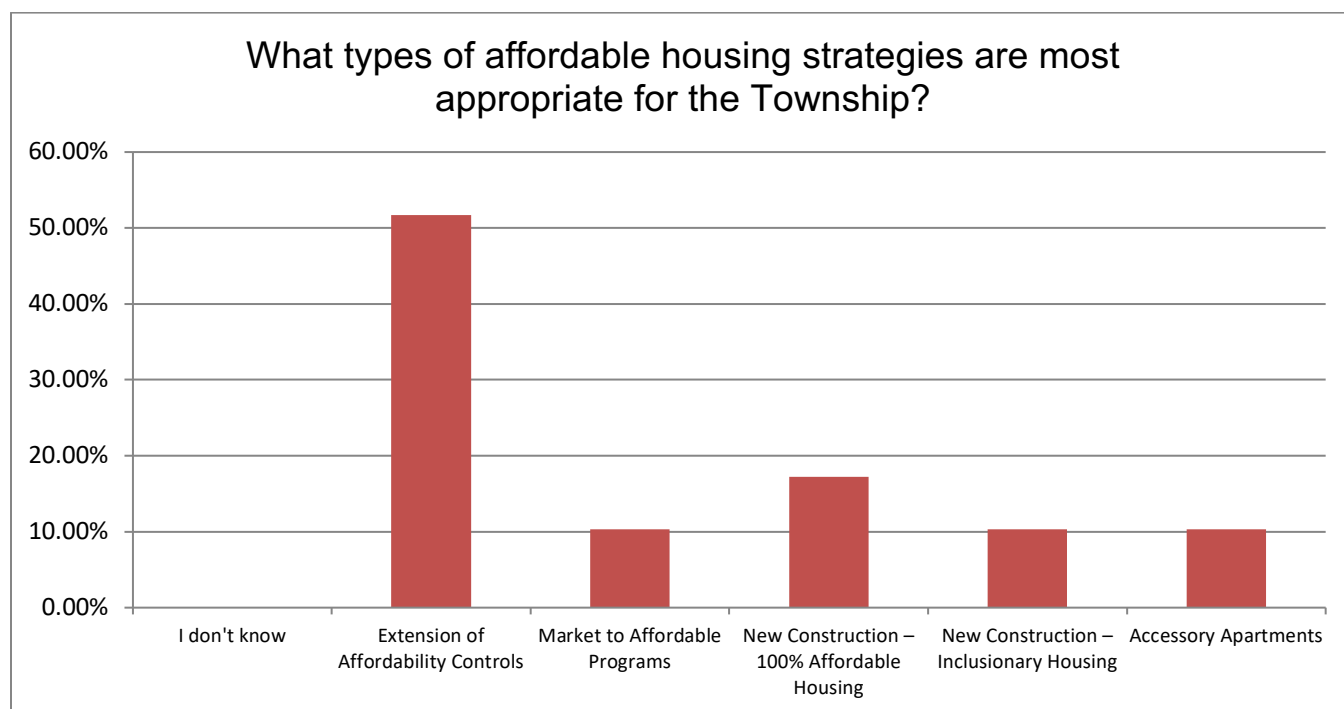
The following data points are related to locations in the Township. The first of which prompted respondents to identify what areas of the Township are most appropriate for affordable housing. Only six (6) responses were received, and four (4) or about 67%, noted that “Area 2” (the southeastern area of the Township) is most appropriate for affordable housing. Please refer to the map attached as an Appendix for reference. There was one open ended response to this question which stated “Why is the land area of NWS Earle included? Can we contest this?”.



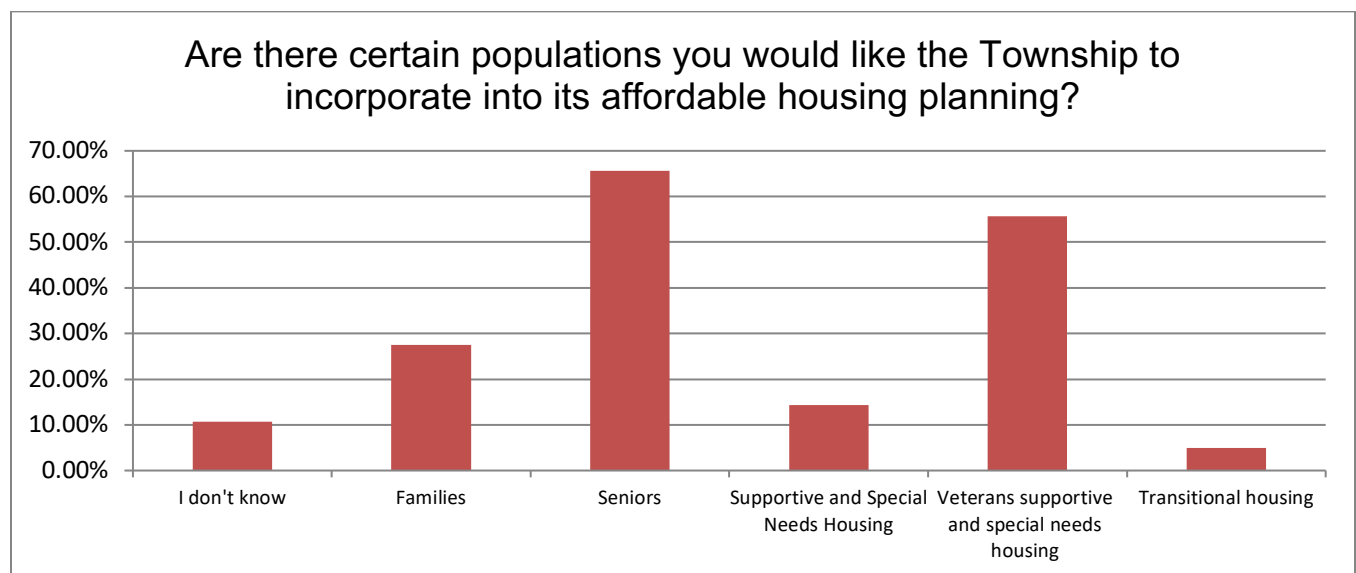
The following question prompted respondents to note on the map what areas they believe are most appropriate for the construction of new development, including but not limited to inclusionary development (mix of market rate and affordable homes) and 100% affordable housing development. There were 20 responses to this question, with most respondents, 70%, stating “Area 2” (the southeastern area of the Township) is most appropriate, consistent with the previous question related solely to affordable housing development. Ten open-ended responses were received related to this question, four of which referenced Route 34 south. Two mentioned traffic concerns related to new development, one mentioned the potential impact to schools, one explicitly stated that no areas are appropriate, and two responses were not relevant to the question.



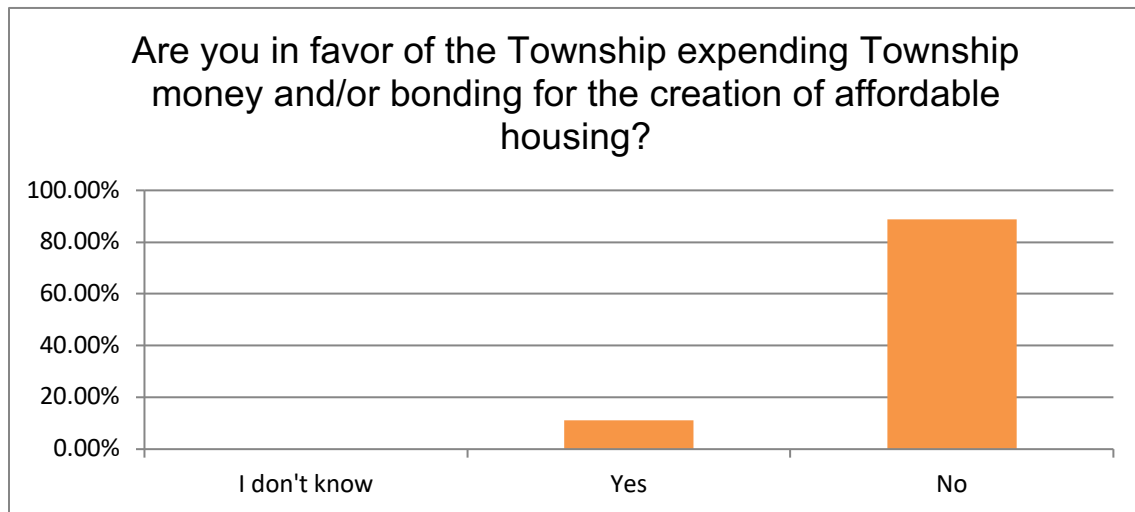
The next data topic explored preferred types of affordable housing in the Township. The first question solicited feedback on the specific affordable housing strategy they find to be most appropriate in Colts Neck, with 29 responses received. A slight majority, about 52%, preferred extensions of affordability controls. The strategy preferred second-most was the new construction of 100% affordable housing developments, which was about 17% of respondents. There was one open-ended response to this question which simply stated “No!”. For reference, the options were as follows: Extension of Affordability Controls (keeping existing affordable homes affordable for more time), Market to Affordable Programs (converting existing market rate homes to affordable homes; limited to 10 units), New Construction – 100% Affordable Housing (a new development with only affordable homes), New Construction – Inclusionary Housing (a new development with both market rate and affordable homes), Accessory Apartments (an additional home on a single-family home property that is either part of an existing home or its own structure; the tenant is chosen by the Township affordable housing administrator; limited to 10% of the obligation).



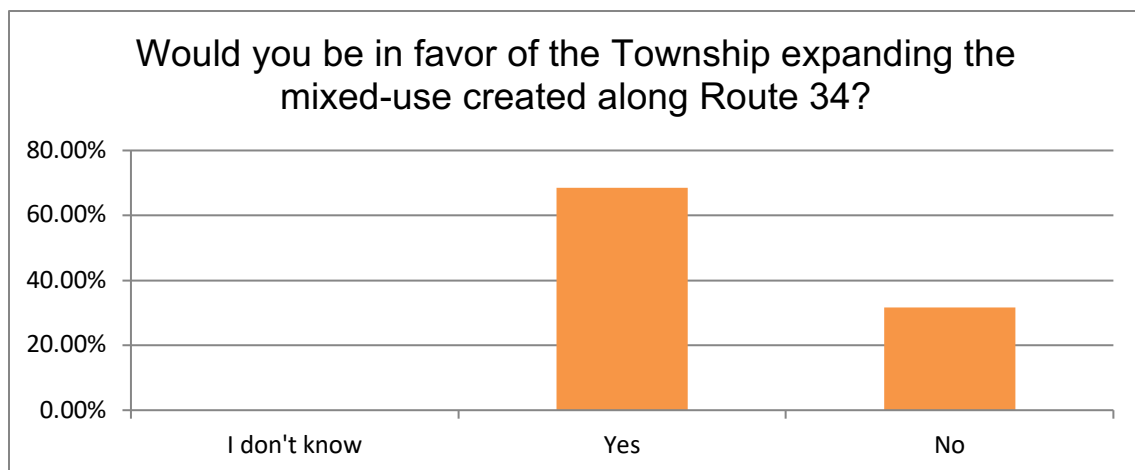
The next question in this topic prompted respondents to think about which populations would be most appropriate for affordable housing in the Township, with 52 responses to the question. Most respondents, over 65%, noted their preferred population for affordable housing is Seniors. The second-most preferred population is Veterans. For reference, the options were as follows: Families (not reserved for a particular population; 50% minimum), Seniors (55 years older; 30% maximum), Supportive and Special Needs Housing (individuals with mental illness, physical or development disabilities, or other special needs groups), Veterans supportive and special needs housing (reserved for veterans and/or their families), Transitional housing (temporary housing for those who have recently been homeless or lack stable housing).



The last topic explored related to municipal actions regarding affordable housing. The first question asked respondents if they are in favor of the Township expending Township money and/or bonding for the creation of affordable housing. This does not include the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, which contains funds collected by the Township for the purpose of creating and administering affordable housing homes. A significant majority, almost 90% of the 18 responses, stated that they were not in favor of the Township expending money or bonding for the creation of affordable housing. Of the 18 responses, only 2 noted they were in favor.



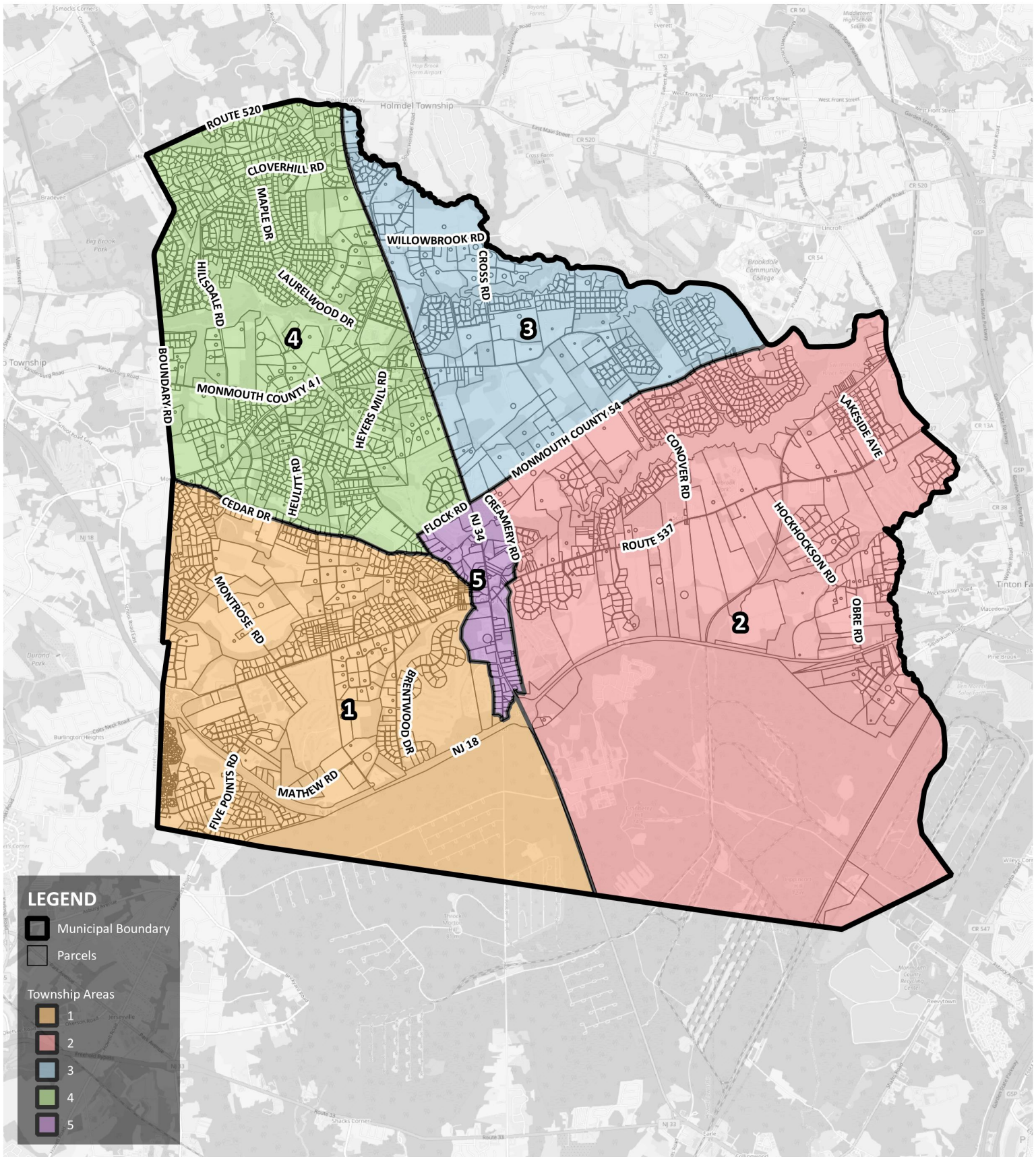
The second question in this topic was related to the Township expanding mixed-use zoning along Route 34. Specifically, the question asked respondents if they were in favor of the Township expanding the mixed-use zoning (a mix of residential and commercial uses) created along Route 34 as part of the Township's third round housing plan. This question generated 19 responses. Approximately 68%, or 13 respondents, noted that they were in favor of expanding the mixed-use zone, while 32%, or 6 respondents noted the opposite.





The final question was a general open-ended one which prompted respondents to share any thoughts or ideas about affordable housing in Colts Neck. Five open-ended responses were received, of which two suggested residents should be allowed to vote, two offered concerns on the impacts of public services including traffic impacts, and one suggested the implementation of accessory dwelling units.

The data collected from the public input meeting yielded insights into resident's perceptions of affordable housing within the Township and will assist with affordable housing planning in the fourth-round. The Township residents who participated in the public input meeting were longtime homeowners, and typically 55 years or older. Respondents favored extensions of affordability controls, veterans housing and senior housing as their preferred affordable housing strategies and populations. While responses were low, residents found that "Area 2" is most appropriate for new development and affordable housing, they were receptive to expanding the mixed-use zoning created along Route 34, and they were not interested in the municipality using Township funds or bonding for the creation of affordable housing.



COLTS NECK TOWNSHIP

TOWNSHIP AREAS

MONMOUTH COUNTY NJ

DATA SOURCES: Google Earth 2023; NJGIN Parcels 2023

