# TOWNSHIP OF COLTS NECK
# PLANNING BOARD
# MEETING MINUTES
# JULY 14, 2026, AT 7:00 P.M.

Mr. Corsi called the meeting to order by reading the following statement: "As Presiding Officer of the Colts Neck Planning Board, I hereby declare that the notice requirements of the law has been satisfied by prominently posting a notice of this meeting on the Township Bulletin Board, and that there has been transmitted a copy of said Notice to the Asbury Park Press and that a copy is on file in the office of the Township Clerk. This meeting is a quasi-judicial proceeding. Any questions or comments must be limited to issues that are relevant to what the board may legally consider in reaching a decision and decorum appropriate to a judicial hearing must be maintained at all times. I further order that this public announcement be placed in the minutes of this meeting."

Salute to the Flag.

Roll Call.

| | |
|---|---|
| PRESENT: | Corsi, Viola, Buzzetta, Lutkewitte, Sullivan, Taeschler, Stivala, Montalvo, Lesbirel, Taylor |
| ABSENT: | Caswell (EA) |
| ALSO PRESENT: | Michael Steib, Esq.; Timothy Anfuso, PP; Scott Taylor, PP |

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion to approve the June 9, 2026 with update for date correction to reflect Planning Board meeting not Zoning Board, Meeting Minutes:

| | |
|---|---|
| OFFER: | Viola |
| SECOND: | Corsi |
| AFFIRMATIVE: | Corsi, Viola, Buzzetta, Sullivan, Taeschler, Montalvo, Lesbirel, Taylor |
| NEGATIVE: | None. |

## RESOLUTIONS

None.

## ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

### 1. Contract to Appoint Scott Taylor Rehabilitation/Need for Redevelopment Resolution

Mr. Anfuso noted Mr. Scott Taylor was being requested to perform a rehabilitation study on the Rt 34 corridor on behalf of the governing body with the resolution adopted on June 10, 2026,

requesting the Planning Board to prepare a rehabilitation and redevelopment study. The Route 34 corridor for consideration is from Flock Road and Phalanx to Route 18/Village Inn. The Governing Body retained Mr. Scott Taylor as Special Projects Planner.

Mayor Viola noted that in March 2018 the Court's decision included consideration that the governing body was reviewing whether the Route 34 corridor needed rehabilitation or redevelopment. As part of Colts Neck's plan for 2020, the mixed-use overlay zone was put in place to try to stimulate some development and to date only one development has been created. Mayor Viola noted that this is the next step to make sure that the township creates a plan for what they want the corridor to look like.

Vice President of Taylor Design Group, a Planning and Landscape Architecture Firm headquartered in Mount Laurel, New Jersey which works almost exclusively for municipalities and counties on park design, streetscape design, redevelopment planning throughout the state.

Mr. Taylor echoed he was here to assist with the Redevelopment and Housing law that sets forth all of the required statutory steps for redevelopment. Under the Redevelopment and Housing Law, there are two different types of redevelopment designation- one is with condemnation and the other is without condemnation. The governing body selected without condemnation as there cannot be any use of eminent domain as part of this process. Any development or anything else that would occur would be voluntary on the part of the landowner, an applicant, or a contract purchaser.

Mr. Taylor continued noting the designation for rehabilitation requires multiple statutory criteria to be reviewed in the areas of review. The parcels must meet one of those specific criteria, with one exception and that exception being that if you have 25 parcels that all meet and in the center there is one that may not meet the criteria itself, it can be considered with an overall redevelopment area or rehabilitation area. This area the Township has proposed includes 68-70 parcels. After the study is completed, the Planning Board would review and produce their recommendation for rehabilitation/redevelopment and then the Township Committee would review and designate the area appropriately.

Mr. Taylor further noted that the redevelopment process allows an incredible degree of specificity, such as including images as to what the Township wishes to see in the corridor for rehabilitation/redevelopment. Any project would still have to come before the Planning Board for site plan and/or subdivision approval in the normal course of action like any other application.

Chairman Corsi inquired about the timing to which Mr. Taylor noted the start is proposed for August and preliminary findings available early fall.

Board Member Mr. Taylor, noted reservations around lack of transparency regarding the selection of Mr. Taylor's firm, evidence of any competitive selection process, very minimal local experience in Monmouth County, and that most of the projects are parks and recreational areas, not commercial area redevelopment.

Mr. Scott Taylor noted work in other local municipalities across their team, past and present, in Tinton Falls and other places with a focus on retaining community character and spoke to a range of community character/size from Trenton to Avalon. He opined that his job is to learn the community, learn the characteristics of every community, understand that dynamic, and then guide the town to help them advance their vision. He noted the park imagery is more aesthetic, however the firm has completed dozens of redevelopment plans, and the firm has received awards for their project work and would be happy to provide examples.

Board Member Mr. Taylor, asked for evidence of knowledge and experience in scale of redesigning a community or a commercial zone.

Mr. Taylor noted an Avalon project in the early 2000s for revitalization for their downtown area, making comparisons to Colts Neck with commute zones in the community and how collectively with professionals and townspeople the cost for the reconstruction was recouped within 10 years by the increase in rateables.

Mr. Lesbirel asked if any projects had been solely on septic and if there were civil engineers on staff with Taylor Design Group.

Mr. Taylor noted projects have been conducted within septic only as well as Pinelands restrictions. There are no civil engineers on staff however there is knowledge of applicable elements typically associated with the projects and that they would work through an engineer for specific utility calculations.

Mr. Sullivan noted Colts Neck is not Trenton and the culture matters to the Town.

Mr. Taylor noted reiterated the range of communities he has supported and noted the key is learning the vision and implementing effectively in the plan.

Mr. Lesbirel asked about the inclusion of farms in the corridor of consideration, remarking on pending legislation protecting farms from inclusion in redevelopment plans. Mr. Taylor noted that was a consideration to potential future flexibility with those properties simply to square off the investigation zone, noted ultimately the designations would be up to the discretion of the Township bodies he would simply include the data in the study.

Mr. Corsi stated that this is the first step as far as hiring Mr. Taylor and noting this is a study area and no actual plan is being reviewed or approved at this meeting.

Mr. Anfuso took this time to note that the Highway Access Management Plan would also be added into considerations for Mr. Scott Taylor in regards to this redevelopment/rehabilitation project as a whole.

Mr. Viola noted that Mr. Taylor came highly recommended and the governing body investigated and proceeded from there to request the study. Mr. Anfuso noted there is no bidding process because it is a professional service contract and there is no requirement to bid.

A board member asked how coordinated with Township Boards this study would be and Mr. Scott Taylor noted he may provide updates but the collaborative elements are in the determination of what will be in the redevelopment area, which is where the Township can exclude properties that met the criteria, which is after the study is complete and data is presented. Mr. Scott Taylor noted he could provide a touch base with the Board at the October 13th meeting.

Chairman Corsi opened the floor for public comment.

Rob Scales, Queens Pass Resident, asked about the 2004 Taylor Group donation to the Burlington Democrat County Association to which Mr. Taylor noted no charitable contributions were paid to any party in 2004 from the firm.

Motion to approve the contract appointing Scott Taylor of Taylor Design Group to conduct rehabilitation/redevelopment study:

| | |
|---|---|
| OFFER: | Taeschler |
| SECOND: | Lesbirel |
| AFFIRMATIVE: | Corsi, Viola, Buzzetta, Lutkewitte, Sullivan, Taeschler, Stivala, Montalvo, Lesbirel |
| NEGATIVE: | None. |

Chairman Corsi thanked Mr. Taylor for his time.

2. **Consistency Review: Ordinance No. 2026-14 An Ordinance Supplementing Chapter 102, "Development Regulations" of the Code of the Township of Colts Neck, Article VIII, "Zoning Requirements," "Part 4. Zoning and Design Requirements for Residential Districts," Section 102-85.4, "A-8 Overlay Residential District"**

Mr. Anfuso noted that as a result of the March 9th 2026 order from Honorable Judge Grasso Jones regarding the Fourth Round Affordable Housing Plan she mandated that the Township perform certain tasks within specific dates to maintain immunity and one of the requirements in that order is to rezone 68 Obre Road to allow a density of 5.6 units per acre, have multi-family dwellings, and have 40 affordable housing units. Negotiations have been occurring with the property owner and some agreements to improve the plan have been achieved which include a 23.5% set aside- which provides 50 affordable housing units where the order would have only required 42 out of the 212 units on the project.

Mr. Anfuso continued and noted the amendment to the Master Plan Fair Share Housing Element was completed at the April 7th, 2026 meeting and confirmed the ordinance is consistent with the Planning Board's action in adopting the April 7th amendment to the fair share of housing for it and that the Governing Body introduced the ordinance last night. In August the ordinance will be up for public hearing and adoption by the Township Committee.

Mr. Steib echoed Mr. Anfuso's statements and added that this is not a hearing on the ordinance itself or the specifics of the ordinance, although if Board Members have something that they

consider a recommendation or a response, they could include that in the report. Comments were made that the proposed conceptual site plan available at the time of the meeting was not being voted on and a reminder that this is only to approve the consistency review of the overlay zone. Mr. Steib noted the infrastructure concerns and off-site improvements would be something of consideration in the application review.

Mr. Buzzetta stressed that failure to approve the rezoning will immediately lead to loss of immunity and leave the town unprotected for builders remedy lawsuits immediately. He further opined that no one wants this and no one asked for it, but it is the law.

Mayor Viola also noted the developers and committee worked to reduce the encroachment on Naval Weapons Station Earle's military buffer zone and that this vote is not being for or against affordable housing it is a simple question of is this consistent with the Master Plan.

Chairman Corsi opened the floor for public comment and question. No comments or questions were addressed.

Motion to accept as consistent with the Master Plan:

| | |
|---|---|
| OFFER: | Lutkewitte |
| SECOND: | Stivala |
| AFFIRMATIVE: | Corsi, Viola, Buzzetta, Lutkewitte, Stivala, Montalvo, Lesbirel |
| NEGATIVE: | Sullivan, Taeschler |

**3. Colts Neck Affordable Housing Alliance – Scatter Sites Strategy**

Mr. Patrick Lesbirel, Colts Neck resident, along with other Township residents Mr. Michael Taylor and Mr. Mary Pahira presented a PowerPoint to offer a different approach to Affordable Housing using a Scatter Site Strategy through the nonprofit "Colts Neck Affordable Housing Alliance". Mr. Lesbirel noted he is a NJ licensed architect, builder and real estate developer. Mr. Lesbirel showcased projects he had been part of while introducing the concept plan in Colts Neck which would rely on landowners to donate an acre of property in the AG zone, to be subdivided for three modular units (one duplex and one accessory dwelling unit) which would be on septic and well and meet UHAC considerations for bedrooms.

Mr. Lesbirel noted concerns over developers if the town lost immunity and what infrastructure costs to the Township could amount to as a result. He opined that apart from the infrastructure concerns, the Township does not own an abundance of developable land and does not have funding to purchase available lots. This proposed strategy relies on property owners to donate the land to the Town for affordable housing.

Mr. Lesbirel continued that with this strategy, the builders/developers would be paired with an approved Veterans Housing or non-profit organization. Any farmland not currently preserved would be eligible to participate in this voluntary land acquisition program and that the modular and prefabricated elements of the proposal limit noise of construction, time for construction, and reduce cost. The range of units is proposed to cost between $144,000- $232,000 and feels

financing can be secured through grants and borrowing against the equity of the land value. Mr. Lesbirel noted that community support is needed for this strategy to be successful.

Mr. Michael Taylor introduced an alternate strategy utilizing greenway space that the Township already owns to complete Affordable Housing projects. In this strategy, the Township would take one acre from several greenway spaces to develop low density units like with the donated land strategy and then replace one-to-one any land utilized by purchasing or securing a new greenspace parcel. Conversations centered around the issues with Green Acres and the time investment in working through a plan of this nature.

Mr. Lesbirel noted that some grants he had awareness of were closing applications in September and the alliance would need to act quickly to make deadline.

Ms. Mary Pahira also noted that more awareness and community engagement creating support will be beneficial. Ms. Pahira requested the option to host a town hall to speak with landowners.

Anthony Luchese, New Street resident, believes marketing is required and the more conversation the better.

John Cantalupo, asked about the costs associated with the non-profit and salaries for operations, Mr. Lesbirel noted no salaries and no costs to the Town for the non-profit work.

The Board thanked the group for their efforts and made a recommendation that the group request time with the Township Committee and that they see if they can acquire a lot and pursue one project with the donated land farm site strategy. Additional flags were raised given the court ruling on previous rounds and for long-term planning this may benefit the Round Five plan which would be in consideration closer to 2035. The Board also noted the appeals are for Round Three but the timeline for appealing Round Four is not active and that they would be amenable to offer a Town Hall if supported by Township Committee and a solid plan of action is created.

The Board to an informal vote and all supported the group to speak with the Township Committee regarding the plan.

Motion to enter Executive session at 8:41pm:

| | |
|---|---|
| OFFER: | Viola |
| SECOND: | Taylor |
| AFFIRMATIVE: | Corsi, Viola, Buzzetta, Lutkewitte, Stivala, Montalvo, Lesbirel |
| NEGATIVE: | None |

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Steib briefed the Board on discussions regarding the Notaro Settlement. The settlement echoes previous plans supported during executive session, with one change that the homes are 2,100 sf footprint and will involve building coverage variances in both applications with the sites being rezoned to A-3.

Motion to leave executive 8:45pm:

| | |
|---|---|
| OFFER: | Lutkewitte |
| SECOND: | Montalvo |
| AFFIRMATIVE: | Corsi, Viola, Buzzetta, Lutkewitte, Sullivan, Taeschler, Stivala, Montalvo, Lesbirel |
| NEGATIVE: | None |

**OPEN SESSION**

The Board returned to open session at 8:46pm.

1. **PB770 Notaro : 9 Heyers Mill Road, Block 30 – Lot 18.02**

Motion to approve Notaro settlement:

| | |
|---|---|
| OFFER: | Lutkewitte |
| SECOND: | Montalvo |
| AFFIRMATIVE: | Corsi, Viola, Buzzetta, Lutkewitte, Sullivan, Taeschler, Stivala, Montalvo, Lesbirel |
| NEGATIVE: | None |

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

A motion to adjourn was made at 8:49 pm and unanimously carried.

I hereby certify that the above is a true and exact copy of the meeting minutes for the meeting conducted on July 14, 2026, adopted by the Planning Board of Colts Neck Township at its meeting held on September 8, 2026.

Krista A. Hill-Kane, Secretary
Planning Board of
Colts Neck Township