

**MINUTES OF THE
MENDHAM BOROUGH JOINT LAND USE BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2026
GARABRANT CENTER, 4 WILSON ST., MENDHAM, NJ**

CALL TO ORDER/FLAG SALUTE

The Special meeting of the Mendham Borough Joint Land Use Board was called to order at 7:30 p.m., and the open public meeting statement was read into the record.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Kelly – Absent	Mr. Kay – Absent
Ms. Bushman – Absent	Ms. Garbacz – Present
Councilmember Traut – Present	Mr. Molnar –Present
Mr. Pace – Present	Mr. Heller – Alternate 1 -Present
Mr. Sprandel – Present	VACANT- Alternate 2
Mr. D’Urso– Present	Mr. Benigno– Alternate 3- Present
	Mr. Chambers– Alternate 4 – Present

Also Present: Mr. Germinario – Board Attorney
Mr. Ferriero – Board Engineer

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. December 16, 2025

Motion by Mr. Molnar seconded by Mr. Kay, and unanimously carried by voice vote to adopt the minutes of the December 16, 2025, Joint Land Use Board Regular Meeting, as written.

Roll Call:

In Favor: Mr. Pace, Mr. Sprandel, Mr. D’Urso, Mr. Kay, Ms. Garbacz, Mr. Molnar, and Mr. Chambers.

Opposed:

Abstain: Councilmember Traut, Mr. Heller, and Mr. Benigno

Motion Carried

b. January 20, 2026

Motion by Mr. Pace, seconded by Mr. Heller, and unanimously carried by voice vote to adopt the minutes of the January 20, 2026, Joint Land Use Board Regular Meeting, as written.

Roll Call:

In Favor: Councilmember Traut, Mr. Pace, Mr. Sprandel, Mr. D’Urso, Ms. Garbacz, Mr. Molnar, Mr. Heller, Mr. Benigno, and Mr. Chambers.

Opposed:

Abstain: Mr. Kay

Motion Carried

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman D’Urso opened the meeting to the public for questions and comments on items not included on the agenda. There being none, the public session was closed.

RESOLUTIONS

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Annual Report

A subcommittee was created at the previous meeting to review and develop draft ordinances, and they requested proposals from the planner to understand the costs involved. Council Member Traut, as part of the subcommittee, proposed several ordinance updates, including parking fees within approved developments, updating the Wireless Telecommunications code, generator setback guidelines, short-term rental regulations, sidewalk maintenance responsibilities, and addressing inconsistencies in gate height versus fence height. The board discussed budget allocation for these proposals, with suggestions that it could come from the joint land use board budget or the council budget. A subcommittee was created to review and develop draft ordinances, and they requested proposals from the planner to understand the costs involved. The annual report to the council was approved after minor revisions.

Motion by Mr. Molnar, seconded by Mr. Pace, and unanimously carried to approve the annual report as revised:

Roll Call:

In Favor: Councilmember Traut, Mr. Pace, Mr. Sprandel, Mr. D'Urso, Mr. Kay, Ms. Garbacz, Mr. Molnar, Mr. Heller, Mr. Benigno, and Mr. Chambers.

Opposed:

Abstain:

COMPLETENESS

28-25 Lawrence Straub & Tracy Beder

8 Hillcrest Ave.

Block 602 Lot 12

Present: Mr. Encin – Architect
Mr. Straub – Applicant

Mr. D'Urso recused himself

Mr. Ferriero summarized his completeness letter dated December 18, 2025. Mr. Ferriero recommends that the application be deemed complete, subject to the waivers.

Motion by Council Member Traut, seconded by Mr. Kay, and unanimously carried to deem the application complete.

Roll Call:

In Favor: Councilmember Traut, Mr. Pace, Mr. Sprandel, Mr. Kay, Ms. Garbacz, Mr. Molnar, Mr. Heller, Mr. Benigno, and Mr. Chambers.

Opposed:

Abstain:

HEARINGS

**28-25 Lawrence Straub & Tracy Beder
8 Hillcrest Ave.
Block 602 Lot 12**

Present: Mr. Encin– Architect
Mr. Straub – Applicant

Mr. Molnar waived qualifying Mr. Encin since he had been in front of the Board numerous times. Mr. Encin and Mr. Straub were sworn. Mr. Germinario reviewed the public notice and found it to be adequate.

Mr. Straub introduces himself as an active member of the community and owner of the property at 8 Hillcrest Avenue. Mr. Straub summarized the need for the proposed addition.

Mr. Encin described the property at 8 Hillcrest Avenue, a pre-existing one-and-a-half story frame home constructed in 1949. Mr. Encin noted that the property includes a driveway, garage, wood deck, walkways, shed, and a pre-existing pool with patio pavers. Mr. Encin stated that the proposed work involves improving the existing house, replacing materials, and adding a one-story family room addition. Mr. Encin noted that the current variance issue is the impervious coverage of the property, which is 4453 square feet, with a proposed increase to 4715 square feet. Mr. Encin explains that the proposed increase in impervious coverage is 262 square feet, but the total over the allowable is 537 square feet. Mr. Encin noted that the building coverage with the proposed changes is 1968 feet, which is still 174 square feet below the allowable building coverage number and that the proposed changes include filling a wood deck area with a deck that matches the existing height. Mr. Encin discussed the proposed changes to the one-car garage, including improving its depth to accommodate a full-size car. Mr. Encin notes that the existing wide driveway is used to park cars, and the proposed addition includes a 16-foot by 17-and-a-half-foot family room space. Mr. Encin explains that the proposed family room addition will have access to the existing wood deck. Mr. Molnar asks about the type of foundation for the proposed addition, and Mr. Encin explains it will likely be a crawl space. Mr. Chambers asked that with the increased impervious coverage, would a drywell be needed. Mr. Ferriero explains the state requirement for stormwater management and the threshold for minor development and that the proposed increase in impervious coverage is below the threshold for minor development, so drywells are not required. Mr. Encin explains that the proposed changes include converting the sitting room into a primary bedroom and repurposing portions of the bathroom and the bedroom count will remain the same, with two upstairs and one downstairs. Mr. Encin stated that the proposed changes will improve the living space and address accessibility issues. Mr. Encin discusses the removal of the existing wood ramp and the creation of a new entry door. Mr. Molnar inquiries about the termination of the fireplace unit and its height above grade. Mr. Encin explains that the fireplace exhaust will be three or four feet off the back end of the family room and that the existing walkway will be removed, and some of it might not be necessary with the proposed changes. Mr. Encin explains that the proposed work is a hardship variance due to the small increase in impervious coverage and the benefits of improving the living space and that the proposed changes will not pose any detriment to the property or the neighborhood.

Mr. Molnar asked if there were any public comments or questions. There being none, public comment was closed.

Mr. Sprandel made a motion to approve the application with conditions as outlined in the resolution and was seconded by Mr. Kay.

Roll Call:

In Favor: Councilmember Traut, Mr. Pace, Mr. Sprandel, Mr. Kay, Ms. Garbacz, Mr. Molnar, Mr. Heller, Mr. Benigno, and Mr. Chambers.

Opposed:

Abstain:

Motion Carried

ADJOURNMENT

There being no additional business to come before the Board, a Motion was made by Council Member Traut and seconded by Mr. Molnar. On a voice vote, all were in favor. Mr. D'Urso adjourned the meeting at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa J. Smith

Lisa Smith
Land Use Coordinator