

U.L. v. Carteret (Assuming)  
South Plainfield

5 May 1987

- 2 letters from Executive Director Opalski, dated May 5, 1987, to Mayor.

attached: review of municipality's housing element / fair share plan. (mediation report)

Letters: 2 pgs.

Attach: 8 pgs.

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STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
COUNCIL ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING

CA000739F

Arthur R. Kondrup, *Chairman*  
(609) 987-2186

707 Alexander Road • CN 813 • Trenton, N.J. 08625-0813

MAY 7

May 5, 1987

Re: Municipality of South Plainfield  
County of Middlesex

Dear Mayor:

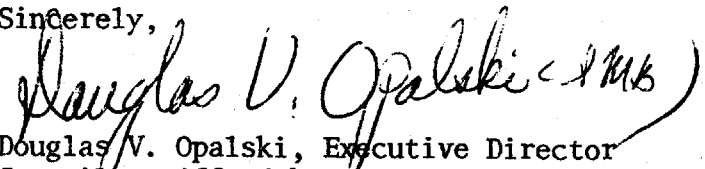
Your municipality filed an adopted housing element and accompanying fair share plan with the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) for substantive certification. An objection(s) was filed with COAH within the 45 days of the publication of your petition for substantive certification. As a result, COAH will engage in mediation that hopefully will result in a resolution of the dispute(s).

Both you and the objector(s) will be contacted by a COAH mediator to establish a schedule for mediation.

Please be prepared with your authorized mediation representatives. Please also remember that no more than three persons may be your official representatives.

If you have any questions please call the Principal Planner assigned to your municipality.

Sincerely,

  
Douglas V. Opalski, Executive Director  
Council on Affordable Housing

cc: Planning Board Chairman  
Municipal Attorney  
Objectors of Record:

SMB/DVO/py  
d0204e



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MAY 7

Mayor, Borough of South Plainfield  
2480 Plainfield Ave.  
South Plainfield, New Jersey 07080

Dear Mayor:

Enclosed please find a review of your municipality's housing element/fair share plan submitted to COAH. This report was the result of a staff and COAH task force review. The concerns raised are expected to be addressed during mediation.

Sincerely,

Douglas V. Opalski, Executive Director  
Council on Affordable Housing

by Joanne M. Hartis  
Principal Planner

cc: Objectors of Record

SMB/py  
d0256e

MEDIATION REPORT  
SOUTH PLAINFIELD BOROUGH, MIDDLESEX COUNTY  
April 9, 1987

I. Background

The Borough of South Plainfield is located in northern Middlesex County bounded by Piscataway, Edison and Plainfield Townships. The Borough is classified under the State Development Guide Plan as being in a growth area and has a population of 22,032. The southern half is dominated by heavy and light industrial uses while the northern section is primarily residential. There are currently close to 210 acres of vacant, developable, residential land within the Borough.

II. Housing Element

Housing in South Plainfield is primarily single-family with 91% of the 6,532 units falling into that category. During the 1987-1993 period the total housing stock is expected to increase by 1,019 units, 300 of which are currently in varying stages of approval and construction. In addition, land for 715 units is already or soon to be zoned.

The Borough serves as an employment center with covered employment estimated at 17,715 and expected to increase to 19,800 by 1993, averaging 300 new jobs per year.

The Housing Element submitted by the Borough contained an adequate amount of housing and demographic information but lacked U.S.G.S. and Wetlands Maps as well as a copy of the Master Plan.

### III. The Numbers

63 (indigenous)	403 (pre-credited need)
-7 (spontaneous rehab)	-56 (rehab)
<u>56</u> rehabilitation component	<u>347</u> inclusionary component

$$\underline{56 + 347 = 403}$$

No credits or adjustments were requested.

### IV. Fair Share Plan

#### A. Rehabilitation Program

The plan states that the Borough will "provide for the rehabilitation of the 61 housing units..."(p.20). However, no details were included addressing funding, program administration or controls on affordability. Furthermore, the Borough only needs to rehabilitate 56 units rather than the 61 mentioned in the plan.

#### B. Inclusionary Development/Sites Chosen

The Borough has identified seven sites as suitable for the construction of low and moderate housing. The seven sites amount to a total area of 186 acres, 129 of which are developable. The Borough recommends rezoning for low/moderate income housing on all seven sites. Site visits were conducted to all sites except site 7 to assess site suitability.

##### Site 1 - Morris Avenue

The Morris Avenue site is 6.15 acres and is located on the northwest side of Morris Avenue bounded by Cedar Brook Avenue to the south. The site contains wetlands on either end leaving the center portion the most feasible for development. Surrounding uses include schools, single-family residences and a Middlesex County Water Company well-field. The site is currently owned by the Borough which proposes it for the location of a 100 unit senior citizen complex. However, a committed funding source and project plan should be submitted.

### Site 2 - Harris Steel

Site 2 is a 100 acre site located on New Brunswick Avenue near route 287. South Plainfield maintains that 55 acres are developable. However, there are discrepancies between the site location map submitted to COAH and the Harris Steel tract map. The location of the wetlands varies widely between the two maps and, therefore, either a verification is needed that the tract map is legitimate or the Borough should submit National Wetlands Maps. The inclusion of soils maps would also be beneficial in assessing the viability of the site. Harris Steel wants to utilize a portion of the site for industrial purposes. They would like to have the property rezoned as mixed use with seven acres designated for the construction of 70 low/moderate units, 36 of which will be rental units. Surrounding uses are heavy and light industrial to the north, east and south and residential to the west. Both a site visit and maps of the area make obvious the fact that the site has some serious constraints that need to be addressed.

### Site 3 - Universal Avenue

The Universal Avenue site is located on the border of Edison Township south of Oak Tree road with access only from Park and Delancey streets in Edison. The site is 41 acres only 30 of which are developable due to a significant portion lying in wetlands. The site will accommodate 240 market units at a density of 5.9 units/acre with 48 units being low/moderate units. The site is bordered to the west, north and south by railroad lines and mixed industrial uses.

#### Site 4 - Pomponio Avenue

Site 4 is a 20 acre site owned by the Borough and located on Pomponio Avenue between 2nd place and Clinton Avenue. Nine of the 20 acres lie in Wetlands and therefore only 11 acres are developable. The site will accommodate 120 market units with 24 set-aside for low and moderate income households. Densities will be 6 dwelling units per acre. Surrounding uses range from light industrial to single family residences.

#### Site 5 - Coppola Farms

The Coppola Farms site consists of 25 acres south of route 287 adjacent to Piscataway Township along New Dorman Road. The Borough intends to rezone the site as mixed use in a manner similar to the Harris Steel site with 65 low/moderate units 30 of which will be rental units. Surrounding uses include light industrial to the north and west, single-family to the east and a defunct missile base to the northeast.

#### Site 6 - Metuchen Diocese

Site 6 is a 7 acre site, one acre of which is environmentally constrained due to wetlands and floodplains. The site is located on Tompkins and Clinton Avenues and will accommodate four low/moderate income units and sixteen market units. Densities will be 2.9 units per acre. The site is bordered to the south by a school and by single family residences on the remaining three sides. A site visit indicated that the eastern portion is seriously constrained by wetlands and floodplains and that the odd shape of the site may result in additional locational constraints.

Site 7 - Elderlodge

The Elderlodge site is 1.46 acres and is located in a floodplain. The Borough currently has local approvals for 100 age restricted units with 10 units set-aside for low/moderate income households. Because it is located entirely in a flood plain site 7 does not appear to be a suitable site for the location of low/moderate income housing.

New Construction

<u>Site</u>	<u>low/moderate</u>	<u>market units</u>	<u>total</u>
1. Morris Avenue	100	0	100
2. Harris Steel	70	0	70
3. Universal Avenue	48	192	240
4. Pomponio Avenue	24	96	120
5. Coppola Farm	65	0	65
6. Diocese Tract	4 (?)	16	20
7. Elderlodge	10 (?)	90	100
	<u>307</u> + 14 (?)	<u>394</u>	<u>715</u>
inclusionary need	347		
units to be zoned	-321		
unaddressed need	<u>26</u>		

A site visit by COAH staff indicated that the Borough contains some sites that appear to be vacant and developable that were not included on the listing of fair housing sites. Additional information is needed on the following sites.

1. New Dorman road adjacent to the commercial area and west of Corporate Blvd.
2. The defunct missile site on Durham Avenue.
3. The vacant land north of Coolidge street along the border of Edison Township.
4. Frederick Avenue site.



C. Infrastructure

The Borough did not include any information or maps addressing the availability of water and sewer.

D. Zoning

1. Rental Component

The Borough's pre-credited need of 403 exceeds the Council's limit of 125 and therefore requires a rental component. The plan calls for a rental component of 66 rental units. The plan already assumes a 1 1/3 credit for the rental units. However, it is the Council's policy that credit cannot be given for rental units until construction is completed. At that time the Borough can down zone on another site to compensate for the number of credits received. Until that time however, the Borough's plan for 66 rental units falls short of the 20% requirement by 15 units.

2. Bedroom Distribution

The plan includes an affordable housing ordinance which includes a section on bedroom distribution in accordance with COAH rules.

3. Range of Affordability

The affordable housing ordinance includes a section on range of affordability in accordance with COAH rules.

E. Program Administration

The Borough has included an ordinance establishing a housing authority to "ensure that housing units designated as low or moderate income units...shall remain affordable to and be occupied by low or moderate income households" (p. 8).

The proposed funding mechanism is a housing trust fund with unspecified residential and non-residential fees. The ordinance provides for a \$1.00 per square foot assessment when there is a bonus height or floor area ratio increase. However, it is unclear whether the \$1.00 is only for the bonus or for all new square footage. It should be noted that the legal status of housing trust funds is not clear. The legislature has not adopted enabling legislation, and lawsuits have been filed against a number of municipalities, who have adopted ordinances creating these funds. It is unlikely that COAH will be in a position to grant substantive certification to a fair share plan dependent upon a housing trust fund.

F. Affordability Controls

The Borough's ordinance contains two conflicting sections which should be resolved. In section 116-6(F) it states that resale and rental controls shall remain in effect for the life of the unit or until the Borough determines a need for the unit no longer exists. However, in section 116-7(A) the ordinance states that restrictions on the resale of low/moderate income units shall expire thirty years from the date of the initial sale. In any case a provision should be included stating that affordability controls shall remain in effect for not less than twenty years.

G. Affirmative Marketing Plan

South Plainfield has included an ordinance with an affirmative marketing plan in accordance with COAH rules.

H. Summary of Additional Information Required

1. Administration and funding information for the rehabilitation program.
2. Confirmation on location of environmental constraints on Harris Steel site.
3. Information on not listed vacant sites.
4. Availability of utilities.
5. Additional information including a project plan and sources of funding for the proposed Morris Avenue senior citizen project.
6. Information regarding the environmental constraints and ultimate viability of the Elderlodge and Metuchen Diocese sites.