

CHAPTER 435

AN ACT concerning affordable housing, amending and supplementing P.L.1985, c.222.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. Section 7 of P.L.1985, c.222 (C.52:27D-307) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:27D-307 Duties of council.

7. It shall be the duty of the council, seven months after the confirmation of the last member initially appointed to the council, or January 1, 1986, whichever is earlier, and from time to time thereafter, to:

- a. Determine housing regions of the State;
- b. Estimate the present and prospective need for low and moderate income housing at the State and regional levels;
- c. Adopt criteria and guidelines for:

(1) Municipal determination of its present and prospective fair share of the housing need in a given region which shall be computed for a 10-year period. Municipal fair share shall be determined after crediting on a one-to-one basis each current unit of low and moderate income housing of adequate standard, including any such housing constructed or acquired as part of a housing program specifically intended to provide housing for low and moderate income households. Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, a municipality shall be entitled to a credit for a unit if it demonstrates that (a) the municipality issued a certificate of occupancy for the unit, which was either newly constructed or rehabilitated between April 1, 1980 and December 15, 1986; (b) a construction code official certifies, based upon a visual exterior survey, that the unit is in compliance with pertinent construction code standards with respect to structural elements, roofing, siding, doors and windows; (c) the household occupying the unit certifies in writing, under penalty of perjury, that it receives no greater income than that established pursuant to section 4 of P.L.1985, c.222 (C.52:27D-304) to qualify for moderate income housing; and (d) the unit for which credit is sought is affordable to low and moderate income households under the standards established by the council at the time of filing of the petition for substantive certification. It shall be sufficient if the certification required in subparagraph (c) is signed by one member of the household. A certification submitted pursuant to this paragraph shall be reviewable only by the council or its staff and shall not be a public record;

Nothing in P.L.1995, c.81 shall affect the validity of substantive certification granted by the council prior to November 21, 1994, or to a judgment of compliance entered by any court of competent jurisdiction prior to that date. Additionally, any municipality that received substantive certification or a judgment of compliance prior to November 21, 1994 and filed a motion prior to November 21, 1994 to amend substantive certification or a judgment of compliance for the purpose of obtaining credits, shall be entitled to a determination of its right to credits pursuant to the standards established by the Legislature prior to P.L.1995, c.81. Any municipality that filed a motion prior to November 21, 1994 for the purpose of obtaining credits, which motion was supported by the results of a completed survey performed pursuant to council rules, shall be entitled to a determination of its right to credits pursuant to the standards established by the Legislature prior to P.L.1995, c.81;

(2) Municipal adjustment of the present and prospective fair share based upon available vacant and developable land, infrastructure considerations or environmental or historic preservation factors and adjustments shall be made whenever:

- (a) The preservation of historically or important architecture and sites and their environs or environmentally sensitive lands may be jeopardized,
- (b) The established pattern of development in the community would be drastically altered,
- (c) Adequate land for recreational, conservation or agricultural and farmland preservation purposes would not be provided,
- (d) Adequate open space would not be provided,
- (e) The pattern of development is contrary to the planning designations in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan prepared pursuant to sections 1 through 12 of P.L.1985, c.398 (C.52:18A-196 et seq.),
- (f) Vacant and developable land is not available in the municipality, and

(g) Adequate public facilities and infrastructure capacities are not available, or would result in costs prohibitive to the public if provided; and

(3) (Deleted by amendment, P.L.1993, c.31).

d. Provide population and household projections for the State and housing regions;

e. In its discretion, place a limit, based on a percentage of existing housing stock in a municipality and any other criteria including employment opportunities which the council deems appropriate, upon the aggregate number of units which may be allocated to a municipality as its fair share of the region's present and prospective need for low and moderate income housing. No municipality shall be required to address a fair share beyond 1,000 units within ten years from the grant of substantive certification, unless it is demonstrated, following objection by an interested party and an evidentiary hearing, based upon the facts and circumstances of the affected municipality that it is likely that the municipality through its zoning powers could create a realistic opportunity for more than 1,000 low and moderate income units within that ten-year period. For the purposes of this section, the facts and circumstances which shall determine whether a municipality's fair share shall exceed 1,000 units, as provided above, shall be a finding that the municipality has issued more than 5,000 certificates of occupancy for residential units in the ten-year period preceding the petition for substantive certification in connection with which the objection was filed.

For the purpose of crediting low and moderate income housing units in order to arrive at a determination of present and prospective fair share, as set forth in paragraph (1) of subsection c. of this section, housing units comprised in a community residence for the developmentally disabled, as defined in section 2 of P.L.1977, c.448 (C.30:11B-2), shall be fully credited pursuant to rules promulgated or to be promulgated by the council, to the extent that the units are affordable to persons of low and moderate income and are available to the general public.

In carrying out the above duties, including, but not limited to, present and prospective need estimations the council shall give appropriate weight to pertinent research studies, government reports, decisions of other branches of government, implementation of the State Development and Redevelopment Plan prepared pursuant to sections 1 through 12 of P.L.1985, c.398 (C.52:18A-196 et seq.) and public comment. To assist the council, the State Planning Commission established under that act shall provide the council annually with economic growth, development and decline projections for each housing region for the next ten years. The council shall develop procedures for periodically adjusting regional need based upon the low and moderate income housing that is provided in the region through any federal, State, municipal or private housing program.

2. Section 10 of P.L.1985, c.222 (C.52:27D-310) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:27D-310 Essential components of municipality's housing element.

10. A municipality's housing element shall be designed to achieve the goal of access to affordable housing to meet present and prospective housing needs, with particular attention to low and moderate income housing, and shall contain at least:

a. An inventory of the municipality's housing stock by age, condition, purchase or rental value, occupancy characteristics, and type, including the number of units affordable to low and moderate income households and substandard housing capable of being rehabilitated, and in conducting this inventory the municipality shall have access, on a confidential basis for the sole purpose of conducting the inventory, to all necessary property tax assessment records and information in the assessor's office, including but not limited to the property record cards;

b. A projection of the municipality's housing stock, including the probable future construction of low and moderate income housing, for the next ten years, taking into account, but not necessarily limited to, construction permits issued, approvals of applications for development and probable residential development of lands;

c. An analysis of the municipality's demographic characteristics, including but not necessarily limited to, household size, income level and age;

d. An analysis of the existing and probable future employment characteristics of the municipality;

e. A determination of the municipality's present and prospective fair share for low and moderate income housing and its capacity to accommodate its present and prospective housing needs, including its fair share for low and moderate income housing; and

f. A consideration of the lands that are most appropriate for construction of low and moderate income housing and of the existing structures most appropriate for conversion to, or rehabilitation for, low and moderate income housing, including a consideration of lands of developers who have expressed a commitment to provide low and moderate income housing.

3. Section 11 of P.L.1985, c.222 (C.52:27D-311) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:27D-311 Provision of fair share by municipality.

11. a. In adopting its housing element, the municipality may provide for its fair share of low and moderate income housing by means of any technique or combination of techniques which provide a realistic opportunity for the provision of the fair share. The housing element shall contain an analysis demonstrating that it will provide such a realistic opportunity, and the municipality shall establish that its land use and other relevant ordinances have been revised to incorporate the provisions for low and moderate income housing. In preparing the housing element, the municipality shall consider the following techniques for providing low and moderate income housing within the municipality, as well as such other techniques as may be published by the council or proposed by the municipality:

(1) Rezoning for densities necessary to assure the economic viability of any inclusionary developments, either through mandatory set-asides or density bonuses, as may be necessary to meet all or part of the municipality's fair share;

(2) Determination of the total residential zoning necessary to assure that the municipality's fair share is achieved;

(3) Determination of measures that the municipality will take to assure that low and moderate income units remain affordable to low and moderate income households for an appropriate period of not less than six years;

(4) A plan for infrastructure expansion and rehabilitation if necessary to assure the achievement of the municipality's fair share of low and moderate income housing;

(5) Donation or use of municipally owned land or land condemned by the municipality for purposes of providing low and moderate income housing;

(6) Tax abatements for purposes of providing low and moderate income housing;

(7) Utilization of funds obtained from any State or federal subsidy toward the construction of low and moderate income housing;

(8) Utilization of municipally generated funds toward the construction of low and moderate income housing; and

(9) The purchase of privately owned real property used for residential purposes at the value of all liens secured by the property, excluding any tax liens, notwithstanding that the total amount of debt secured by liens exceeds the appraised value of the property, pursuant to regulations promulgated by the Commissioner of Community Affairs pursuant to subsection b. of section 41 of P.L.2000, c.126 (C.52:27D-311.2).

b. The municipality may provide for a phasing schedule for the achievement of its fair share of low and moderate income housing which is not inconsistent with section 23 of P.L.1985, c.222 (C.52:27D-323).

c. The municipality may propose that a portion of its fair share be met through a regional contribution agreement. The housing element shall demonstrate, however, the manner in which that portion will be provided within the municipality if the regional contribution agreement is not entered into. The municipality shall provide a statement of its reasons for the proposal.

d. Nothing in P.L.1985, c.222 shall require a municipality to raise or expend municipal revenues in order to provide low and moderate income housing.

e. When a municipality's housing element includes the provision of rental housing units in a community residence for the developmentally disabled, as defined in section 2 of P.L.1977, c.448 (C.30:11B-2), which will be affordable to persons of low and moderate income, and for which adequate measures to retain such affordability pursuant to paragraph (3) of subsection a.

of this section are included in the housing element, those housing units shall be fully credited as permitted under the rules of the council towards the fulfillment of the municipality's fair share of low and moderate income housing.

f. It having been determined by the Legislature that the provision of housing under this act is a public purpose, a municipality or municipalities may utilize public monies to make donations, grants or loans of public funds for the rehabilitation of deficient housing units and the provision of new or substantially rehabilitated housing for low and moderate income persons, providing that any private advantage is incidental.

4. Section 12 of P.L.1985, c.222 (C.52:27D-312) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:27D-312 Regional contribution agreements.

12. a. A municipality may propose the transfer of up to 50% of its fair share to another municipality within its housing region by means of a contractual agreement into which two municipalities voluntarily enter. A municipality may also propose a transfer by contracting with the agency or another governmental entity designated by the council if the council determines that the municipality has exhausted all possibilities within its housing region. A municipality proposing to transfer to another municipality, whether directly or by means of a contract with the agency or another governmental entity designated by the council, shall provide the council with the housing element and statement required under subsection c. of section 11 of P.L.1985, c.222 (C.52:27D-311), and shall request the council to determine a match with a municipality filing a statement of intent pursuant to subsection e. of this section. Except as provided in subsection b. of this section, the agreement may be entered into upon obtaining substantive certification under section 14 of P.L.1985, c.222 (C.52:27D-314), or anytime thereafter. The regional contribution agreement entered into shall specify how the housing shall be provided by the second municipality, hereinafter the receiving municipality, and the amount of contributions to be made by the first municipality, hereinafter the sending municipality.

b. A municipality which is a defendant in an exclusionary zoning suit and which has not obtained substantive certification pursuant to P.L.1985, c.222 may request the court to be permitted to fulfill a portion of its fair share by entering into a regional contribution agreement. If the court believes the request to be reasonable, the court shall request the council to review the proposed agreement and to determine a match with a receiving municipality or municipalities pursuant to this section. The court may establish time limitations for the council's review, and shall retain jurisdiction over the matter during the period of council review. If the court determines that the agreement provides a realistic opportunity for the provision of low and moderate income housing within the housing region, it shall provide the sending municipality a credit against its fair share for housing to be provided through the agreement in the manner provided in this section.

The agreement shall be entered into prior to the entry of a final judgment in the litigation. In cases in which a final judgment was entered prior to the date P.L.1985, c.222 takes effect and in which an appeal is pending, a municipality may request consideration of a regional contribution agreement; provided that it is entered into within 120 days after P.L.1985, c.222 takes effect. In a case in which a final judgment has been entered, the court shall consider whether or not the agreement constitutes an expeditious means of providing part of the fair share.

c. Regional contribution agreements shall be approved by the council, after review by the county planning board or agency of the county in which the receiving municipality is located. The council shall determine whether or not the agreement provides a realistic opportunity for the provision of low and moderate income housing within convenient access to employment opportunities. The council shall refer the agreement to the county planning board or agency which shall review whether or not the transfer agreement is in accordance with sound, comprehensive regional planning. In its review, the county planning board or agency shall consider the master plan and zoning ordinance of the sending and receiving municipalities, its own county master plan, and the State development and redevelopment plan. In the event that there is no county planning board or agency in the county in which the receiving municipality is

located, the council shall also determine whether or not the agreement is in accordance with sound, comprehensive regional planning. After it has been determined that the agreement provides a realistic opportunity for low and moderate income housing within convenient access to employment opportunities, and that the agreement is consistent with sound, comprehensive regional planning, the council shall approve the regional contribution agreement by resolution. All determinations of a county planning board or agency shall be in writing and shall be made within such time limits as the council may prescribe, beyond which the council shall make those determinations and no fee shall be paid to the county planning board or agency pursuant to this subsection.

d. In approving a regional contribution agreement, the council shall set forth in its resolution a schedule of the contributions to be appropriated annually by the sending municipality. A copy of the adopted resolution shall be filed promptly with the Director of the Division of Local Government Services in the Department of Community Affairs, and the director shall thereafter not approve an annual budget of a sending municipality if it does not include appropriations necessary to meet the terms of the resolution. Amounts appropriated by a sending municipality for a regional contribution agreement pursuant to this section are exempt from the limitations or increases in final appropriations imposed under P.L.1976, c.68 (C.40A:4-45.1 et seq.).

e. The council shall maintain current lists of municipalities which have stated an intent to enter into regional contribution agreements as receiving municipalities, and shall establish procedures for filing statements of intent with the council. No receiving municipality shall be required to accept a greater number of low and moderate income units through an agreement than it has expressed a willingness to accept in its statement, but the number stated shall not be less than a reasonable minimum number of units, not to exceed 100, as established by the council. The council shall require a project plan from a receiving municipality prior to the entering into of the agreement, and shall submit the project plan to the agency for its review as to the feasibility of the plan prior to the council's approval of the agreement. The agency may recommend and the council may approve as part of the project plan a provision that the time limitations for contractual guarantees or resale controls for low and moderate income units included in the project shall be less than 30 years, if it is determined that modification is necessary to assure the economic viability of the project.

f. The council shall establish guidelines for the duration and amount of contributions in regional contribution agreements. In doing so, the council shall give substantial consideration to the average of: (1) the median amount required to rehabilitate a low and moderate income unit up to code enforcement standards; (2) the average internal subsidization required for a developer to provide a low income housing unit in an inclusionary development; (3) the average internal subsidization required for a developer to provide a moderate income housing unit in an inclusionary development. Contributions may be prorated in municipal appropriations occurring over a period not to exceed ten years and may include an amount agreed upon to compensate or partially compensate the receiving municipality for infrastructure or other costs generated to the receiving municipality by the development. Appropriations shall be made and paid directly to the receiving municipality or municipalities or to the agency or other governmental entity designated by the council, as the case may be.

g. The council shall require receiving municipalities to file annual reports with the agency setting forth the progress in implementing a project funded under a regional contribution agreement, and the agency shall provide the council with its evaluation of each report. The council shall take such actions as may be necessary to enforce a regional contribution agreement with respect to the timely implementation of the project by the receiving municipality.

5. Section 13 of P.L.1985, c.222 (C.52:27D-313) is amended to read as follows:

C.52:27D-313 Petition for substantive certification.

13. a. A municipality which has filed a housing element may, at any time during a two-year period following the filing of the housing element, petition the council for a substantive certification of its element and ordinances or institute an action for declaratory judgment granting it repose in the Superior Court, but in no event shall a grant of substantive certification

extend beyond a 10-year period starting on the date the municipality files its housing element with the council. The municipality shall publish notice of its petition in a newspaper of general circulation within the municipality and county and shall make available to the public information on the element and ordinances in accordance with such procedures as the council shall establish. The council shall also establish a procedure for providing public notice of each petition which it receives.

b. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection a. of this section, a municipality which filed a housing element prior to the effective date of P.L.1990, c.121, shall be permitted to petition for substantive certification at any time within two years following that filing, or within one year following the effective date of P.L.1990, c.121, whichever shall result in permitting the municipality the longer period of time within which to petition.

The Council shall establish procedures for a realistic opportunity review at the midpoint of the certification period and shall provide for notice to the public.

C.52:27D-307.6 Methodology for change in calculation for loss on June 7, 2000 and after.

6. The change in the calculation of a municipality's determination of present and prospective share of housing need as provided in P.L.2001,c.435 shall apply to the methodology employed by the council for the certification period beginning June 7, 2000 and thereafter.

7. This act shall take effect immediately.

Approved January 10, 2002.