

**STRATFORD JOINT LAND USE BOARD MINUTES
MARCH 26, 2026**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Paul McGovern at 6:30 pm. The Chairman led the board in the pledge of allegiance and a prayer. The public statement was read that the meeting was advertised in the Courier Post, the Collingswood Retrospect, and a notice was posted on the bulletin board at the Borough Hall stating the time and place.

ROLL CALL:

Present

P. McGovern, Chairman	Class IV
K. Walton, Vice-Chairman	Class IV
B. Bove	Class III
T. Hall	Class IV
J. Keenan	Class I
T. Kozeniewski	Class IV
R. Morello	Class II
R. St. Maur	Class IV

T. Costa, Solicitor
T. Reilly, Bach Associates
K. Rauer, Secretary

Absent

M. Chicalo	Alternate I
M. DiGiacomo	Alternate II

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motioned by Mr. Walton and seconded by Mr. St. Maur to approve minutes from February 26, 2026 meeting. All ayes.

NEW BUSINESS – Laurel Mills, LLC, 102 Warwick Road, Block 116, Lots 14 and 14.04. Request for approvals for the project to be extended until September 23, 2026. Peter Flannery of the Bisgaier Hoff on behalf of Laurel Mills, LLC. Said project is an inclusionary development which includes approximately 80 residential units including affordable housing units & approximately 14,000 sq. ft. of retail. Original approvals were in 2019. In 2021 applicant came back for amended approvals. Mr. Flannery stated there has been a lot of litigations preventing the applicant from moving things forward. Applicant is looking for a full extension, 5 years (2 year as of right plus 3 – 1 year extensions). Revised plans have been submitted to Bach. Mr. Flannery stated there are a few more conditions they are hoping to get resolved in next few months then apply for building permits or at least do site work.

Mr. Costa questioned what the remaining conditions. Mr. Flannery stated some final revisions to plans, engineering estimates, posting the performance guarantees, and inspection escrows, and then finalizing the HOA documents.

Mr. Costa questioned the court order received in January stayed everything from period of February 2024 to January 2026 why is extension needed. Mr. Flannery stated the deadline was under the agreement, 2-3 years from construction. Mr. Costa stated it was 36 months in the redevelopment agreement & now it has been pushed to 23 months. Mr. Flannery stated most of that time is for construction.

Mr. McGovern questioned when this extension would take things until & Mr. Costa stated the extension would be until September 2026. Mr. Costa explained what happens during this time of the extension.

Mr. Morello questioned the final revisions, which would be sent to the board. Mr. Flannery stated along the lines of legal descriptions, correcting the plans with respect to legal descriptions if lines have changed or numbers/figures needed to be updated. Mr. Morello stated no architectural or design changes to be made & Mr. Flannery stated not that he knows of.

Mr. Walton questioned even though you are asking for an extension you are still planning to start the site work. Mr. Flannery stated things depended on all remaining items if they would start site work. Mr. Walton questioned when construction will be started & questioned why HOA issues are holding up things when that is something that can be handled separately.

Mr. McGovern questioned Mr. Reilly (Bach Associates) on how fast he feels this whole process can actually start & how it's been since 2019 & the site is an eye-sore. Mr. Flannery stated being in court for litigations has held things up also. Mr. Reilly stated some things can be time consuming but things have been started maybe a month or so. Mr. Flannery stated there were outside approvals that have been completed & additional approvals needed but were done.

Mr. Bove questioned "putting shovels in the ground" with in next 3 months & an approximate completion date. Mr. Flannery stated that is a possibility & an approximate 2 year time span.

Mr. Walton questioned if the intent was to build everything out or build as sold. Mr. Flannery stated he could not give an exact answer & stated they would most likely build out the whole project.

Mr. McGovern stated this has been a long time project & people of the town want this project to happen & not keep on being dragged out.

Mr. Flannery was questioned as to who the builder was & he stated they do not have anyone as of yet. During litigations, they did have a builder lined up but due to that being dragged on that builder pulled out of the project. Mr. Flannery was questioned how long to obtain another builder but he again did not have a definite answer. Mr. Morello stated there is 30 months to completion date so not having one lined up is crunching into their building/completion time. Mr. Flannery was questioned if

they would be using a commercial builder or private builder & stated they originally had a private builder but they pulled out of the project.

Mr. McGovern stated how another townhouse project, in a different location of town, was approved after 2019, and said project has been completed. Mr. McGovern stated said project can be done quickly & the town is frustrated.

Mr. Walton questioned Mr. Costa in regarding to the applicant coming back in September & requesting another extension. Mr. Costa stated they can get another extension but would have to show good reason for it to be approved & would give a year. Automatic extensions can be granted within the 5 year time frame but after that they need to show reasons why they are requesting an extension.

Mr. McGovern requested just this portion be opened up to the public & only this application could be discussed. Mr. Morello motioned and was seconded by Mr. St. Maur. Roll call was taken. All ayes.

Marge Koehler – 11 Homestead Rd – Mr. Costa swore her in. Ms. Koehler stated she lives directly behind where this project has been taking place. Ms. Koehler stated she received a letter from the Mayor saying the owner had sold the property to DR Horton & that is why litigation with the LLC has been terminated. Mr. Flannery stated he was unaware of any letter, that the LLC was not sold. Ms. Koehler questioned why litigation was stopped in February 2025 & Mr. Flannery stated could have been around time they were talking settlement but the litigation was not stopped per say, it was just paused until they discussed potential settlement. Mr. McGovern commented that no one on the board was privy to the letter & Ms. Koehler stated it was on the Mayor's website. Ms. Koehler stated that nothing has been completed; water comes into her yard from said property. Mr. Morello questioned the water onto the residents' yard. Ms. Koehler stated she had to waterproof her basement due to water running down towards her yard & cost approximately \$10,000 to fix. All said issue she states was from when the Laurel Mills property was knocked down & all this damage happened to her basement. Stressed her concerns about the frogs now appearing on her property, the bug & mosquito problem. They were promised fencing between her property & Laurel Mills, LLC., which was on the proposed plans which that was never done/completed either. Mr. Reilly stated they would look further into this & make sure it is added to plans if not on there just as homeowner was promised.

Rob Stone – 205 Vassar Ave. – Mr. Costa swore him in. Mr. Stone stated the project doesn't impact his property but questioned the board about not stopping the applicant & allowing all these extensions. Stated how this project affects all residents in Stratford. Mr. Stone questioned Mr. Flannery about considering selling the property where Mr. Flannery stated they would like to develop the property or sell to a builder. Also stated he would need to speak with Mr. Sethi for said matter.

Mr. McGovern requested this portion be closed to the public. Mr. Walton motioned and was seconded by Mr. St. Maur. Roll call was taken. All ayes.

Mr. Walton commented that there is 30 months left for this project to be 100% complete. He also questioned if property is sold to a developer that they too are bound to this current time line. This current time line started as of January 2026 per the court order. Mr. Bove questioned if within this time frame if project was not completed what would have to be done. Mr. Costa stated they would have to negotiate with Council, which may include penalties.

Mr. Kozeniewski questioned the votes of yes or no for the extension. Mr. Costa stated that a vote of yes is to extend the time limit to September 2026 (6 months) and a vote of no means you deny the extension. Mr. McGovern questioned that the court ruling is pretty much how it is. Mr. Costa stated there would be a conflict if you vote no because of what the Judge had ruled on them having 22 more months; so it's a yes for the extension. Mr. Morello stated that if in 6 months from now there is no movement they could be back for another extension. Mr. Riley reminded Mr. Flannery that a good set of plans would still need to be sent over.

Mr. Costa called for a motion to grant the extension to September of 2026. Motioned by Mr. St. Maur and seconded by Mr. Bove. Roll call was taken and all ayes.

OLD BUSINESS – none

MEMORIALIZATION OF RESOLUTIONS – none

BOARD ACTION - none

CORRESPONDENCE - none

PUBLIC PORTION – Motioned by Mr. Hall and seconded by Mr. Walton to open to the public. All in favor. All ayes. There were no additional people to speak from the public. Motion by Mr. Bove to close the public portion and was seconded by Mr. St. Maur. All ayes.

Before meeting was adjourned, Mr. McGovern discussed an email sent by Sharon (JLUB Administrator) regarding a residential complaint about the new house that is under construction on Vassar Ave. Mr. Reilly stated he did drive by said property on his way into the meeting & upon review of the plans again it does not appear that they are outside their approval of the 2 ½ story build. It does meet the ordinance of being well under 35 feet.

Mr. Bove brought up previous discussion about the Laurel Mill as far as if a new builder comes in are time restraints still the same as they are bound by same plan. Mr. Costa stated things would all go back to the redevelopment agreement for said property allotting a certain amount of time. And if time limit is not met they would have to go back in front of Council for an amended redevelopment agreement as agreement states 36 months.

ADJOURNMENT – Motioned by Mr. Morllo and seconded by Mr. Bove. All ayes. Meeting closed at 7:02 pm.