

RESOLUTION NO. 2025 –08

**RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING/ZONING BOARD OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF ELK, COUNTY OF GLOUCESTER, STATE OF
NEW JERSEY, MEMORIALIZING THE ADOPTION OF THE
FOURTH ROUND HOUSING ELEMENT AND FAIR SHARE
PLAN OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ELK MASTER PLAN**

WHEREAS, the Municipal Land Use Law, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et seq. (the “MLUL”) authorizes the Municipal Planning Board to adopt and subsequently amend the municipalities Master Plan by following the procedures set forth in the MLUL; and,

WHEREAS, one component of the Master Plan is the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan (“HEFSP”); and,

WHEREAS, the Planning Board of the Township of Elk, Gloucester County, previously adopted a Third Round HEFSP on April 13, 2016, pursuant to the MLUL, the Fair Housing Act (“FHA”) at N.J.S.A. 52:27D-310 and the court-upheld Council on Affordable Housing (“COAH”) regulations at N.J.A.C. 5:93 et seq.; and,

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Superior Court approved the Township’s Third Round HEFSP and issued a Third Round Judgment of Compliance and Repose (“JOR”), dated January 25, 2025, which provided Elk Township Third Round immunity from builder remedy lawsuits through July 1, 2025; and,

WHEREAS, in March of 2024, an amendment to the New Jersey’s Fair Housing Act, P.L. 2024,c2 was signed into law (hereafter the “Amended FHA”); and,

WHEREAS, in addition to the Amended FHA, the Acting Administrative Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts issued Directive #14-24, dated December 13, 2024 (“Administrative Directive #14-24”); and,

WHEREAS, the Amended FHA and the Administrative Directive #14-24 establishes a procedure by which municipalities can secure approval of a HEFSP; and,

WHEREAS, that procedure contemplated that the municipality would adopt a resolution by January 31, 2025 committing to a Fourth Round fair share number and filing a declaratory relief action within forty-eight (48) hours of adoption of said resolution, and then file a Fourth Round HEFSP by June 30, 2025; and,

WHEREAS, the Township adopted a resolution on January 21, 2025 committing to a fair share number and the Township thereafter filed a declaratory relief action with the Affordable Housing Dispute Resolution Program (“Program”) and in Superior Court of New Jersey within forty-eight (48) hours from adoption of resolution, seeking protection and repose against exclusionary zoning litigation for a ten (10) year period (July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2035); and,

WHEREAS, no objections were filed challenging the Township’s calculations provided for in the Township’s adopted January 21, 2025, binding Resolution No.33-2025; and,

WHEREAS, pursuant to Administrative Directive #14-24, “After the entry of an order determining present and prospective fair share obligations, the municipality must file with the Program its adopted housing element and fair share plan within 48 hours after adoption or by June 30, 2025, whichever is sooner.”; and,

WHEREAS, a Superior Court Order, dated April 28, 2025, was issued which determined the Township’s Fourth Round Present Need or Rehabilitation Obligation of 17 and the Township’s Fourth Round Prospective Need Obligation of 214; and,

WHEREAS, the Amended FHA provides that “All parties shall be entitled to rely upon regulations on municipal credits, adjustments, and compliance mechanisms

adopted by COAH unless those regulations are contradicted by statute, including P.L. 2024, c.2, or binding court decisions” (N.J.S.A. 52:27D-311(m)); and,

WHEREAS, it is now the Township of Elk Planning Board’s statutory obligation to review and adopt a Fourth Round HEFSP which can be filed with the New Jersey Superior Court of New Jersey and Program; and,

WHEREAS, accordingly the Township of Elk Affordable Housing Planning Consultant, Steven M. Bach, PE, RA, PP, CME, of Bach Associates, PC, has prepared a Fourth Round HEFSP, dated June 2025, to address the Township of Elk’s Affordable Housing obligation under the Amended FHA (the “Fourth Round HEFSP”); and,

WHEREAS, according to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40:55D-13 of the MLUL, the Township of Elk Planning Board scheduled a public hearing for the review and adoption of the Fourth Round HEFSP for June 18, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. at the Township of Elk Municipal Building; and,

WHEREAS, in accordance with provisions of N.J.S.A. 40:55D-13 of the MLUL, the Township of Elk Planning Board published a notice of this public hearing in the Township’s official newspaper at least ten (10) days before the scheduled date of the public hearing and served a copy of said notice upon the clerks of all municipalities adjoining the Township and notice with a copy of the plan upon the Clerk of the Gloucester County Planning Board and upon the New Jersey Office of Planning Advocacy; and,

WHEREAS, a copy of the Fourth Round HEFSP was placed on file with the Township of Elk Planning Board Secretary and Township of Elk Clerk and was available for public review at least ten (10) days before the scheduled date of the public hearing; and,

WHEREAS, the Township of Elk Planning Board held a public hearing on the Fourth Round HEFSP on June 18, 2025; and,

WHEREAS, at the public hearing, Steven M. Bach, PE, RA, PP, CME, provided professional planning testimony regarding the Fourth Round HEFSP and members of the public were provided with an opportunity to ask questions and to provide comments about the HEFSP; and,

WHEREAS, the Township of Elk Planning Board, after carefully considering the evidence presented at the hearing, makes the following factual findings and conclusions of law:

- a. The Township of Elk Planning Board is empowered under the MLUL to adopt and/or amend the Township's Master Plan.
- b. A HEFSP is a component of the Township of Elk's Master Plan.
- c. The adoption of a HEFSP is a way for the Township of Elk to plan to address its affordable housing obligations under the Amended FHA and applicable case law.
- d. The Amended FHA establishes a procedure in which municipalities can secure approval of their HEFSP.
- e. In accordance with the procedures established by the Amended FHA, the Township of Elk adopted a resolution committing to an obligation on January 21, 2025 deadline established by the Amended FHA and filed a declaratory relief action within 48 hours of the resolution seeking continued immunity and the opportunity to pursue approval of a Fourth Round HEFSP.
- f. The Township of Elk's affordable housing consultant, Steven M. Bach, PE, RA, PP, CME, of Bach Associates, PC, has prepared the Township's Fourth Round HEFSP.

g. The Township of Elk Planning Board scheduled a public hearing on the proposed Fourth Round HEFSP for June 18, 2025.

h. The Township's Fourth Round HEFSP was placed on file with the Planning Board at least 10 days in advance of the public hearing and was available for public review.

i. Notice of the June 18, 2025 public hearing was published in the Township of Elk's official newspaper at least 10 days in advance of the public hearing and a copy of this notice was served upon the clerks of the municipalities adjoining the Township of Elk, notice with a copy of the plan was served upon the clerk of the Gloucester County Planning Board and upon the New Jersey Office of Planning Advocacy.

j. At the public hearing, testimony regarding the Township's Fourth Round HEFSP was provided by the Township of Elk's Professional Planner, Steven M. Bach, PE, RA, PP, CME, of Bach Associates, PC, who provided an outline of the State's affordable housing process and provided testimony, both orally and through the Township's Fourth Round HEFSP, as to the Township of Elk's court-approved fair share Fourth Round obligation.

k. At the public hearing, the public was provided an opportunity to comment on the Township's Fourth Round HEFSP.

l. The Township of Elk Planning Board finds that the Township's Fourth Round HEFSP is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Township of Elk Master Plan, that it will guide the use of the lands in the municipality in a manner which protects public health and safety and promotes the general welfare in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28 of the MLUL, and that its adoption will achieve access to affordable housing to meet present and prospective housing needs in accordance with N.J.S.A. 52:27D-3:10 of the Amended FHA.

m. The Township of Elk Planning Board also finds that the Township's Fourth Round HEFSP provides appropriate planning strategies in order to satisfy the Township of Elk's affordable housing obligations.

n. The Township of Elk further recognizes that the adoption of the Township's Fourth Round HEFSP to address the Township of Elk's obligations on or before June 30, 2025 is necessary in order to comply with the Amended FHA and secure the benefits that accompany such compliance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, on this 18th day of June 2025, that the Planning Board of the Township of Elk, by a vote of 8 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstained, hereby approves and adopts the Township's Fourth Round HEFSP which is attached hereto and incorporated herein; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Township's Fourth Round HEFSP supersedes and replaces any prior HEFSP; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Board of the Township of Elk hereby directs its Board Solicitor and Board Secretary to assist the Township of Elk Solicitor to file this adopted resolution and this adopted Fourth Round HEFSP as part of the Township's Fourth Round Declaratory Judgment Action, Docket # GLO-L-104-25, in Gloucester County Superior Court and with the Program within 48 hours after adoption of this Fourth Round HEFSP via E-courts per Directive #14-24; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution with the adopted Township's Fourth Round HEFSP is to be forwarded to the Gloucester County Planning Board and the New Jersey Office of Planning Advocacy, per the MLUL at N.J.S.A. 40:55D-13.

Moved by: Mr. Hughes, seconded by Mr. Lucas, and so ordered by the following roll call vote:

In favor of Approval: Mrs. Nicholson, Mr. Hughes, Mr. Lucas, Mr. McKeever, Mr. Goetsch, Mr. Smith, Mr. Wolf and Mr. Afflerbach

Opposed to Approval: None

The following resolution was memorialized on June 18, 2025, by the following vote:

Moved by: Mr. Hughes

Seconded by: Mr. Lucas

In favor of approval of adoption of resolution: Mrs. Nicholson, Mr. Hughes, Mr. Lucas, Mr. McKeever, Mr. Goetsch, Mr. Smith, Mr. Wolf and Mr. Afflerbach

Opposed to approval: None

Abstained: None

I certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a Resolution approved by the Planning Board of the Township of Elk on June 18, 2025, and memorialized on June 18, 2025.



MATT AFFLERBACH
CHAIRMAN OF THE PLANNING/ZONING BOARD OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF ELK



ANN MARIE WEITZEL
SECRETARY OF THE PLANNING/ZONING BOARD OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF ELK