

Judge Schedules Affordable Housing Mediation Session

For the past six weeks, members of the Township Committee and our professional staff have been working toward a court hearing scheduled for Friday, February 14, 2020.

The purpose of that hearing was for Superior Court Judge Michael Gaus to rule on the Township's request for a 120-day extension of the affordable housing compliance period, and a cross-motion filed by the Fair Share Housing Center opposing that request.

The purpose of Friday's court session has now been changed. The Fair Share Housing Center and the Township asked Judge Gaus for a two-week delay in ruling on the motions. Judge Gaus has agreed and will hold Friday's court session as a case management hearing and as a mediation session.

Due to Friday's mediation session, Township Committee members and staff will not be able to make any public comments regarding affordable housing at Thursday night's public meeting. We understand and share your frustration over not being able to discuss affordable housing on Thursday night, but we trust that you understand that it is never a good idea for those involved in litigation to make public comments on the eve of a mediation session.

Members of the public, of course, are welcome to attend Thursday night's Township Committee meeting and may come to the microphone to make any comments they wish. We assure you that all comments will be considered by the Township Committee. But please understand that we will not be able to respond at that time.

However, that does not mean the Township Committee is not sharing the latest affordable housing developments with the public. For all the latest developments, please refer to the affordable housing page on the Township website: chathamtownship-nj.gov. There, under the heading for Legal Notices and Filings:

- You will see the Township's brief seeking a 120-day extension (this is No. 25 on the list) along with separate certifications from the Township Administrator, Township Clerk, Township Planner and Township Attorney in support of the motion.
- You also will see (as No. 29 on the list) the cross-motion filed by the Fair Share Housing Center opposing the Township's motion.
- No. 33 is the Township's response to the cross-motion.
- And No. 35 is the newest motion filed by attorneys for Betsie Haar, owner of the Dixiedale property, to intervene asking Judge Gaus to allow construction to move forward.

These legal motions represent all of the newest developments on the affordable housing issue. No action on affordable housing will be taken by the Township Committee at Thursday night's meeting.

Thank you for your understanding.