BOROUGH OF MORRIS PLAINS
PLANNING BOARD
HEARING PROCEDURE

Welcome to a public hearing of the Borough of Morris Plains Planning Board. Your input is helpful and appreciated by the Planning Board. To assist the general public in understanding the application review process, this page outlines the procedures established by the Planning Board, in accordance with the law, which shall be followed during the course of the public hearing.

The Board has 9 regular members. The order of events will be guided by an agenda, available to you at the meeting. All plans related to a development matter are required to be available for your review at the Planning Board Office in the Municipal Annex at least ten days before the public hearing.

On occasion an application may not be completed during a meeting. If the case of interest to you is not heard or completed, a continuation date will be announced. Notices in writing will not be repeated.

HEARING PROCEDURE

The Planning Board hears all applications in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-1 et seq.) and the Borough of Morris Plains Ordinance (Chapter 13). Generally this involves site plans and subdivisions, both major and minor. Regardless of the type of application, the hearing process follows an established order.

A. Presentation by the Applicant

- The applicant, typically represented by an attorney, will introduce the site plan or subdivision through the sworn testimony of his/her expert witnesses. It is common for an applicant to have several expert witnesses, each of whom will testify in a given area of expertise (engineering, traffic, planning, environmental matters, etc.)

- The Planning Board will hear one witness at a time. Following the presentation of each witness, the Board and its professional staff will ask questions and seek clarification of that expert’s testimony.

B. Public Questions

- The Planning Board Chair will then invite the public to ask questions of the witness. Please note: Only questions directly related to testimony of the witness are permitted at this time. General comments will be permitted upon conclusion of all expert
testimony. Please raise your hand if you wish to be recognized by the Chair. When called upon to speak, please state your name and address and spell your last name. All hearings are recorded and this information must be part of the minutes.

- The Planning Board Chair may limit questions/comments from the public to a particular period of time per speaker where applications draw a large audience.

- Any attorney appearing in opposition to the application may also present his/her questions at this time in the same manner as the general public.

C. Public Comments

- When the applicant’s case is completed and prior to a vote by the Planning Board, the public will be invited to offer relevant comments and factual information. If you wish to do so, you must be sworn in as a witness. Petitions or statements on behalf of an absent party will not be accepted.

D. Planning Board Decision Process

- Upon conclusion of public comments, the applicant has the opportunity to present a closing statement or summary of the proposal.

- The Board will vote on the application and incorporate its findings of fact and decision in a written Resolution. That document is typically adopted by the Board at the following public meeting.

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