

The March 2, 2026 Regular Session of the Borough Council of the Borough of Spring Lake Heights, Monmouth County, New Jersey was called to order by Mayor Campion at 7:00 p.m. in the Frank E. Adams Municipal Building with a moment of silence and a salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL

Present:

Councilman Leonard Capristo
Councilman John Casagrande
Councilwoman Michele Degnan-Spang
Councilman William Graetz
Councilwoman Sara King
Councilman Dayton Lonsdale
Mayor Christopher Campion

Absent:

Also attending:

John Barrett, Borough Administrator
Andrew Bayer, Borough Special Council
Michael L. Collins, Borough Attorney
Janine Gillis, Borough Clerk
Joseph May, Borough Engineer

Mayor Campion announced: Pursuant to the requirements of New Jersey's Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting was included in the Annual Meeting Notice filed in the Office of the Borough Clerk; posted on the Borough website and in the Municipal Building; published as a legal notice in the Coast Star newspaper; and mailed to those requesting notice and providing payment.

AMEND AGENDA

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded by Mr. Graetz, the agenda was amended to add resolution R2026-63, Resolution of the Borough Council to Enter into Executive Session by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Capristo, Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

APPROVE AMENDED AGENDA

On a motion by Mr. Graetz, seconded by Mrs. Degnan-Spang the agenda as amended was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Capristo, Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

MOVE TO EXECUTIVE SESSION

- **R2026-63**, Resolution of the Borough Council to Enter into Executive Session

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded by Mr. Graetz, Resolution No. R2026-63 was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Capristo, Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

Mayor Campion announced the Borough Council would move into a brief Executive Session at 7:04pm and Attorney Collins stated the topic of discussion was affordable housing.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ROLL CALL

Present:

Councilman Leonard Capristo
Councilman John Casagrande
Councilwoman Michele Degnan-Spang
Councilman William Graetz
Councilwoman Sara King
Councilman Dayton Lonsdale
Mayor Christopher Campion

Absent:

Also attending:

John Barrett, Borough Administrator
Andrew Bayer, Borough Special Council
Michael L. Collins, Borough Attorney
Janine Gillis, Borough Clerk

Borough Clerk Gillis read the resolution into the record.

- **R2026-63**, Resolution of the Borough Council to Enter into Executive Session

WHEREAS, the Open Public Meetings Act provides that the Borough Council may enter into Executive Session to discuss matters that are of a confidential nature, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12; and

WHEREAS, it is recommended by the Borough Attorney and Borough Administrator that the Borough Council enter into Executive Session to discuss matters set forth hereinafter which are permissible for discussion in Executive Session.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Spring Lake Heights, County of Monmouth, State of New Jersey that the Borough Council shall enter into Executive Session to discuss the following matters:

Affordable Housing

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the minutes of the Executive Session shall be released to the public when the need for confidentiality no longer exists, with an estimate of the circumstances and/or time for public disclosure provided in the above-listed anticipated times of decision (“ATOD”).

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded by Mr. Graetz Resolution No. **R2026-63** was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Capristo, Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

There being no further business, on a motion by Mrs. King, seconded by Mr. Casagrande, the executive session was adjourned without objection at 7:15 p.m.

REOPEN REGULAR SESSION

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded by Mr. Graetz, the regular session was reopened at 7:16pm by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Capristo, Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

APPROVE MINUTES - February 17, 2026

On a motion by Mrs. Degnan-Spang, seconded by Mr. Lonsdale, the February 17, 2026 minutes were approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Capristo, Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale
Nays: None Abstain: Mr. Graetz Absent: None

PRESENTATIONS – None

DISCUSSION ITEMS – None

MAYOR & COUNCIL REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Joesph May – Mr. May announced the lowest bidder for the Ocean Road Traffic Calming bid and he recapped the State of New Jersey update on Highway 71. He also stated that after meeting with the contractor, the Borough is hoping to restart Joseph E. Robertson Park around March 16th and that he will be meeting with Monmouth County regarding paving of roads in town this year.

Councilman Capristo – No report

Councilman Casagrande – Mr. Casagrande thanked the Public Works team and the Police Department. Mr. May also thanked the Borough of Spring Lake for stepping up and helping to fix a broken large truck after a Spring Lake Heights employee was injured and unable to do so. Mr. Casagrande reviewed ordinances on the agenda and announced that the budget process for 2026 has started. He also would like to acknowledge the service members in harms way and honored those who died while serving.

Councilwoman King – Mrs. King thanked the Police Department and the Spring Lake First Aid Squad for coming to her aid recently.

Councilman Graetz – Mr. Graetz thanked the Public Works Department, the Police Department and the Spring Lake First Aid Squad for all their hard work during and after the recent storm.

Councilman Lonsdale – No report

Councilwoman Degnan-Spang – Mrs. Degnan-Spang echoed the appreciation to the Borough Departments.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Any Item)

On a motion by Mr. Graetz, seconded by Mr. Lonsdale, the public comment section was opened by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Capristo, Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

Kesley Pegler, 608 Brighton Avenue, explained a situation he had for receiving a ticket for failure to remove snow off the sidewalks on Highway 71. Mayor Campion asked Attorney Collins if a fee can be implemented instead of a court appearance. Mr. Collins stated that it would need to be investigated. Mayor Campion explained there has been many issues lately about code enforcement violations. Mr. Lonsdale reassured Mr. Pegler that the Borough is addressing a systemic improvement.

Joyce Pegler, 608 Brighton Avenue, would like tax paying residents to be treated as neighbors. Mr. Casagrande agreed and responded that code enforcement is about compliance, not punishment. Mayor Campion thanked the Peglers for attending and agreed that situations would be investigated more.

Gaylen Nolan, 1022 Allaire Road, represented the Environmental Commission and inquired if the Council would be pursuing an ordinance change regarding construction dust contamination. Mayor Campion asked Councilwoman King to meet with the commission on this topic.

Karen Burke, 606 Shore Road, inquired if there is an update regarding the dock on Wreck Pond. Mr. Barrett stated the Borough has a cost proposal for removal. Ms. Burke also asked on dredging on Wreck Pond and there is not update on that.

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded by Mr. Graetz, the public comment section was closed by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Capristo, Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

SCHEDULED PUBLIC HEARINGS

- **Ordinance 2026-02** An ordinance implementing 4th round Affordable Housing Plan Element & Fair Share Plan
- **Ordinance 2026-03**, An ordinance amending Chapter 22 Article VI, zoning regulations Section 606 (Zoning District Regulations) creating the AH-5 Zoning District in furtherance of the Borough's obligation to provide for its fair share of affordable housing

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded by Mrs. King, the public hearings for concurrently Ordinance 2026-02 and Ordinance 2026-03 were opened by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Capristo, Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

Michael Collins introduced Special Council Attorney, Andrew Bayer, for Affordable Housing and related litigation. Mr. Bayer explained the Borough's current program process for affordable housing obligations and mediation as well as going before the judge. The Borough received two objectors: the Fair Share Housing Center and an entity that owns four properties in town including 600 Warren Avenue. On January 8, 2026, the current Mount Laurel Judge recommended the Borough's amended proposal be accepted. On February 26, 2026 the judge dismissed the objection of 600 Warren LLC and ordered the Borough to meet the State deadline of March 16, 2026 to adopt the ordinance on the fourth round of affordable housing. Mr. Bayer continued to detail Ordinance 2026-02 and Ordinance 2026-03 and stated that if adopted it would satisfy the Borough's Fourth Round obligations and provide the immunity from builders remedy litigation through 2035.

Mayor Campion questioned what it means to be an "objector". Mr. Bayer explained that the objector was looking for higher density housing at the location. However, the Fair Share Housing Center, along with the court appointed adjudicator, declared against the objection.

Craig Gianetti, Attorney with Day Pitney, on behalf of the property owners of 555 Warren Avenue, RTS Spring Lake LLC spoke about his client first hearing of the affordable housing when he received the legal notice.

On a motion by Mr. Graetz, seconded Mrs. King, the public hearing on Ordinance 2026-02 was closed by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Capristo, Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

Mr. Collins announced, per the previous vote, the public hearing for Ordinance 2026-03 was to be reopened for Public Comment and read the ordinance by title into the record.

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded by Mr. Graetz, the public hearing for Ordinance 2026-03 was reopened by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Capristo, Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale

Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

Craig Gianetti, Attorney with Day Pitney, announced that his client, RTS Spring Lake LLC is the owner of 555 Warren Avenue. RTS Spring Lake LLC would like the opportunity to meet with the town and work on a good use for the property and ask for the ordinance to not be passed this evening. They feel the density of 24 units per acre is limited and not financially viable for this case. Mr. Gianetti claimed the legal noticing of the ordinance was confusing and should be re-noticed. He also stated his client knew nothing of the possibility of the affordable housing overlay zoning on the property when he purchased the property. Mr. Bayer inquired with Mr. Gianetti what the zoning of the property was when his client acquired the location. Mr. Gianetti stated that the zoning was mixed use and the client was interested in the potential multifamily use. Mayor Campion thanked Mr. Gianetti for speaking.

Cornelius Durkin, 600 Warren Avenue, announced that he is and represents the objector to the ordinance. He would like to meet with the Council and counsel regarding the matter. Mayor Campion questioned Mr. Durkin on the timing of the filed objection, and Mr. Durkin responded that the zoning change of 700 Highway 71 was the driving force for the objection. Mayor Campion stated that he would entertain future working communication with Mr. Durkin and respects what the group offers to the town.

Sean McDermott, 554 Mercer Avenue, expressed his concern regarding the redevelopment of the 555 Warren Avenue property and raised his objection to the possibility of a three-story building in his backyard. Mr. Capristo responded to Mr. McDermott's concerns and how the Council is looking to limit loss of control and builder remedy litigation. Mr. Bayer responded that the current zoning for the property allows for 40-foot height and the affordable housing does not change that. Mayor

Campion stated that the zoning change does not negate all other residential zoning standards and requirements such as parking, trash removal, upkeep, etc. Mr. Bayer explained how this property became part of the affordable housing mediation and how the affordable units for projects are a minimum of 20% of total units.

Carol Keller, 558 Mercer Avenue, expressed concern regarding redevelopment of the property. Mr. Bayer explained how the ordinance change is only modifying the zoning and the project would still need to go to the Land Use Board.

On a motion by Mrs. King, seconded Mr. Casagrande, the public hearing on Ordinance 2026-03 was closed by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Capristo, Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded Mr. Graetz, Ordinance 2026-02 was adopted by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Capristo, Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded Mrs. King, Ordinance 2026-03 was adopted by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Capristo, Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

REPORTS, NOTICES & CORRESPONDENCE

- Spring Lake Heights Municipal Court Monthly Report – January 2026
- Public Notice from South Monmouth Regional Sewerage Authority 2026-2027 meeting schedule
- Letter from Upper Freehold Township Re: Resolution 75-26 Objecting to Monmouth County Board of Commissioners purchasing property in Upper Freehold Township & Robbinsville Township

ORDINANCE INTRODUCTIONS – none

CONSENT AGENDA – none

RESOLUTIONS

- **R2026-61**, Awarding a contract to Fernandes Construction for Wall Road Traffic Calming in the amount \$151,301.10

On a motion by Mr. Graetz, seconded by Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Resolution No. R2026-61 was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Capristo, Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

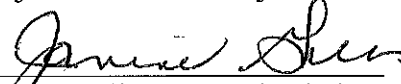
- **R2026-62**, Approving the payment of the itemized claims as set forth on the February 27, 2026 bills list

On a motion by Mr. Casagrande, seconded by Mr. Graetz, Resolution No. R2026-62 was approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Mr. Capristo, Mr. Casagrande, Mrs. Degnan-Spang, Mr. Graetz, Mrs. King, Mr. Lonsdale
Nays: None Abstain: None Absent: None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on a motion by Mrs. King, seconded by Mr. Graetz, the meeting was adjourned without objection at 8:15 p.m.


Janine Gillis, Borough Clerk

Approved:  16, 2026