TO: Township of West Orange Planning Board

FROM: Malvika Apte, AICP, PP, Planning Board Planner
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RE: Master Plan Consistency Memo

Ordinance 2990-26: An Ordinance Amending the Code the Township of West Orange, Chapter 25, "Land Use Regulations," to Establish the Affordable Housing (AH-1) District at Block 113, Lots 262, 264, and 308 to Establish Standards and Regulations for the AH-1 Zone

DATE: October 1, 2026

The Planning Board has received a copy of Ordinance 2990-26, which amends the Township's Land Use Ordinance (Chapter 25) to create the AH-1 Affordable Housing District, and establish zoning standards and regulations for this zone (the "AH-1 Zone Ordinance"). The AH-1 Zone Ordinance rezones Lots 262, 264, and 308 of Block 113 from B-2 to AH-1. The Ordinance was introduced at the Township Council meeting on September 29, 2026.

Requirements Pursuant to the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL)

Pursuant to the Municipal Land Use Law, proposed zoning ordinances, amendments, and other development regulations shall be referred to the Planning Board for review (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-64 & N.J.S.A. 40:55D-26a). The Planning Board shall review the proposed regulation for consistency with the municipal Master Plan and provide recommendations regarding any inconsistencies or other appropriate matters. In *Manalapan Realty v. Township Committee*, the Court determined that some inconsistency is permitted "provided it does not substantially or materially undermine or distort the basic provisions and objectives of the Master Plan." (140 N.J. 366, 384 (1995)).

The Township of West Orange's Planning Board adopted the 2019 Master Plan Update on December 4, 2019.

Summary of Ordinance 2990-26

The purpose of the AH-1 Affordable Housing Zone, which applies to Block 113 Lots 262, 264, and 308, is to provide inclusionary family affordable housing opportunities, particularly along Main Street. Provision of such housing in this area of the Township is supported by West Orange's Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, which was adopted by the Planning Board on November 10, 2025.

Ordinance 2990-26 establishes multifamily dwellings as the only principal permitted use in the AH-1 zone and requires a 20% affordable unit set aside. In addition to outlining affordable housing requirements, (i.e., income and bedroom distribution), the AH-1 Zone Ordinance establishes new bulk standards, parking regulations, site improvement standards, and specific architectural standards for buildings within the zone.

Consistency Analysis

Ordinance 2990-26 and its creation of the AH-1 Zone is consistent with the Township's 2019 Master Plan Update. One of the major planning objectives set forth in 2019 Master Plan Update is to "Provide for the Housing Needs of Senior Citizens and Low and Moderate Income Households" (page 10). Further, another objective is to "Improve and Maintain Existing Residential Neighborhoods," by supporting "new residential construction at suitable densities" (page 10). The construction of a new multifamily development within the AH-1 Zone will improve the condition of the lot, which is currently vacant, and provide an increased residential density in a suitable location (i.e., fronting along Main Street). The Township's 2019 Master Plan Update specifically recommends to "promote additional residential uses" within the Downtown/Main Street (page 36).

Overall, Ordinance 2990-26 is in alignment 2019 Master Plan goals and objectives and it is consistent with the Township's 2019 Master Plan Update.