

BOROUGH OF MEDFORD LAKES, NEW JERSEY

HISTORIC COMMISSION MEETING (7:30pm)

January 8, 2026

A scheduled regular public meeting of the Historic Commission of the Borough of Medford Lakes, New Jersey, was held on Thursday, January 8, 2026, beginning at 7:30pm in Oaks Hall located at Municipal Cabin, 1 Cabin Circle, Medford Lakes, NJ 08055. The Meeting began with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance. Board Secretary McIntosh read the Open Public Meetings Act: pursuant to the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of this scheduled regular meeting has been published in the Burlington County Times and posted on the official bulletin board of the Borough of Medford Lakes. Those wishing to be notified of changes to scheduled meetings were notified via email or regular mail. Chairman Barker called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

Commission Secretary Mark J. McIntosh called roll, Chairman Brad Barker, Co-Chairman Mike Dzwill, Member Danielle Byrne, Member Donald P. Schroeder, Member Shawn Collins and Alternate Member #1 Joann Tragesser answered in attendance. Alternate Member #2 Robin Birchenough was absent.

MINUTES

Co-Chairman Dzwill introduced approval of the December 4, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes, seconded by Ms. Byrne.

VOTE TO APPROVE

	Moved	Seconded	Ayes	Nays	Absent	Abstain
Chairman Brad Barker			X			
Co-Chairman Mike Dzwill	X		X			
Member Danielle Byrne		X	X			
Member Donald Schroeder			X			
Member Shawn Collins			X			
Alternate 1 Joann Tragesser						X
Alternate 2 Robin Birchenough					X	

APPLICATIONS

#H01-2026 (Haven Properties, LLC) – Renovate Shed/Build Detached Garage

Chairman Barker invited the applicant to explain the proposed project.

Jeff Reynolds, contractor for this project, explained that this is phase two of a larger project that has already been presented to the Commission. The goal of this project is to bring this updated cabin back to its original 1953 form according to historical photographs. There is currently an out structure shed with rotting exterior plywood and baton strips. The plan is to renovate the shed by removing the existing siding and wrap in real logs with interlocking corners and fly rafters. It will be chinked to match the house. The vinyl windows will be removed and replaced with wood push out casements stained to match the house. This project also includes building a detached garage on the left elevation of the property. The garage will have real log siding, interlocking corners, chinking and a wooden outswing barn style door; all built to historically match the original structure.

Ms. Tragesser asked if a survey was provided to show where on the property the garage will be built.

Mr. Reynolds stated that he does not have a survey but will provide one to the township. He added that there is no plan to exceed the allowed lot coverage and they will be staying within the allowed setbacks.

Chairman Barker asked if they are refacing the shed or rebuilding the shed.

Mr. Reynolds stated that they will be refacing the shed. There is some minor internal framing that will be addressed due to rot. The location will not change as it currently rests on a concrete slab. The color will match the existing home. He is encouraging the owner to do a full external finish so that it can be properly sealed. The goal is to do a full historic renovation of all three structures. Soffits will be removed and replaced with log fly rafters with bead board. All exterior will be wood, no capping.

Chairman Barker asked if the shingles will match the existing home.

Mr. Reynolds stated that the shingles in the historical pictures are a three-tab slate color, the owners are requesting the shingles match the original. There will be no metal on the roof. The gutters will be galvanized half round gutters.

Chairman Barker opened public comment.

1. Joe Aromando of Medford Lakes asked for an explanation of what Mr. Reynolds described as bead board. He also would like to know what species of wood the logs be.

Mr. Reynolds described bead board and pointed out an example in the pictures from the application. He also stated that the wood for the logs will all be cedar.

Hearing no further comment, Chairman Barker closed public comment.

Chairman Barker motioned to approve the application, seconded by Ms. Tragesser.

VOTE TO APPROVE

	Moved	Seconded	Ayes	Nays	Absent	Abstain
Chairman Brad Barker	X		X			
Co-Chairman Mike Dzwill			X			
Member Danielle Byrne			X			
Member Donald Schroeder			X			
Member Shawn Collins			X			
Alternate 1 Joann Tragesser		X	X			
Alternate 2 Robin Birchenough					X	

Chairman Barker explained that the applicant will come back in one week to present to the Planning Board.

OLD BUSINESS

Board Secretary McIntosh distributed copies of Chapter 138 Historic Preservation and Chapter 145 Land Development for the Commission to collectively review. The Commission held an open discussion sharing their thoughts and opinions on Chapter 138.

Mr. Collins feels that the entire Borough should be held to the standard of the Historic District. He feels it will prevent the argument of applicants “screaming equality.” He prepared a document listing inconsistencies and “holes” in the existing ordinance.

Chairman Barker feels that at a minimum the boundaries should be updated and this should be done by a professional rather than volunteers like what has been done in the past. He feels there will be push back with the suggestion of making the entire town “historic,” which could potentially end the Historic District entirely.

Board Secretary McIntosh reminded the Commission to send all communications through his office as to stay in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Mr. Aromando began speaking out of turn from public seating, Chairman Barker reminded Mr. Aromando to reserve his comments for the public comment portion of the meeting, this portion of the meeting is for Commission members discussion only.

Mr. Collins stated he would not push to have existing residents suddenly change their homes to comply with historic guidelines, his point would be to prevent new residents from painting their homes bright pink.

Chairman Barker began listing the main suggested changes collaborated since the last meeting.

Chinking should be added and clarified as a synthetic type material such as “perma-chink.” He feels this should be widely accepted as it does prevent cracking and help log siding to last longer.

“Composite material” should be defined as a combination of wood fibers and plastic.

He feels that the difference between a “guardrail” and a “handrail” should be clearly stated. A handrail is what you “grab” as opposed to a guardrail which prevents you from falling off. A guardrail is required for decks over 30 inches. Handrails, the grabbable portion, are better to be made of metal to prevent splinters.

Mr. Collins feels a definition should be stated for balusters/spindles.

The next item discussed was the use of the term “wood look.” With the development of new, much more durable and longer lasting materials, the guidelines need to be clearly stated.

The definition Chairman Barker suggested for “metal roof” was “a roofing system with metal panels and interlocking seams.” He further suggested a percentage requirement before a waiver is needed.

Ms. Tragesser suggested defining “muttons” and “mullions.” She suggested defining mullions as the “vertical element between doors and windows and is often weight bearing.” Whereas “muttons” can be pulled in and out and do not have to actually be part of the window. She also feels the “commissions responsibilities” should be updated.

There was Commission discussion on updating the Historic District Inventory done by the Boy Scouts in the 1990s. The cost is discussed and the difficulty of identifying all materials used from simply a street view. The Commission agreed that a new report is necessary.

Mr. Aromando continued speaking out of turn from public seating continually interrupting Commission discussion.

Next item discussed was defining “routine maintenance.” The Commission discussed simply using the term “in-kind materials.” Chairman Barker agreed stating that the use of “in-kind materials” should be able to be replaced without review.

Roofing materials were discussed. Chairman Barker stated that color guidelines as clear for roofing materials, but specifics need to be added for soffit and fascia. The discussion continued on possibly allowing up to 10% of a roof to be metal without the need for a waiver. Flat roofs should only be allowed for existing, and all new flat roofs must be reviewed and discussed.

Mr. Aromando continued speaking out of turn from public seating continually interrupting Commission discussion.

The Commission discussed shutters. The current ordinance states “wood or vinyl” the Commission agrees the wording should be changed to “wood or composite.” The general consensus of the Commission was to remove the word “vinal” from the ordinance entirely.

Language should be added regarding storm doors. The Commission generally feels this is an area that is difficult to enforce. Chairman Barker feels it is best to leave this section alone as applicant tend to purchase storm doors after the application is complete and there is no follow up.

Chairman Barker feels a section should be added regarding garage doors. Earth tone colors and style should be addressed. Mr. Collins feels the term “earth tones” should be clearly spelled out.

Acceptable colors for downspouts and gutters according to the current ordinance are “dark brown, white or painted to match trim.” The Commission agrees the white option should be removed.

Storm windows were briefly discussed; Chairman Barker feels this issue is irrelevant as no one has installed storm windows since the 1970s. It was suggested to remove the section, however it was decided to leave the section for the older houses that might choose to replace existing.

Mr. Aromando continued speaking out of turn from public seating continually interrupting Commission discussion.

The Commission discussed the non-log structures that are within the Historic District. Currently, the ordinance states the homes must remain “earth tones.”

The code currently states that fences can be any material except chain-link or cinderblock. Chairman Barker feels the acceptable materials should be listed. The Commission discussed materials that are currently allowed such as “decorative metal.”

Mr. Aromando continued speaking out of turn from public seating continually interrupting Commission discussion.

There was discussion on fences, the Commission considered full removal of fences from the Historic Ordinance and leave the issue up to zoning. Chairman Barker requested Board Secretary McIntosh look into the possibility of simply removing the section.

Mr. Aromando continued speaking out of turn from public seating continually interrupting Commission discussion, making the conversation incomprehensible.

Chairman Barker suggested reviewing the Historic application requirements. Some of the list of requirements are not needed, others are needed but applications are accepted without it being submitted.

Mr. Aromando continued speaking out of turn from public seating continually interrupting Commission discussion, making the recording incomprehensible.

The Commission agrees a survey is needed to properly evaluate applications.

Mr. Aromando continued speaking out of turn from public seating continually interrupting Commission discussion, making the conversation incomprehensible. He continued to argue against requiring the applicants to submit a survey.

The Commission agrees a survey should at minimum be required for new structures. Color pictures should always be required. Ms. Byrne questioned if drawings were sufficient rather than insisting on “elevation” drawings. Discussion continued on what should happen when applications do not complete the checklist.

Mr. Aromando continued speaking out of turn from public seating continuing his insistence that a survey should not be required, making the recording incomprehensible. Chairman Barker reminded Mr. Aromando that there would be a public comment section of the meetings where his comments will be welcomed. Mr. Aromando continued speaking and bantering with the Commission making the conversation largely inaudible stating he couldn't wait for public comment as his "memory is not good." Chairman Barker suggested Mr. Aromando take notes.

The Commission agrees the statement "visible to public view" should be stricken from the ordinance entirely.

The Commission discussed the purpose of the Certificate of Appropriateness. Board Secretary McIntosh explained the purpose and the involvement of the Planning Board. He will get clarification for the next meeting.

Sheds were discussed and described as a "new structure" in the ordinance.

The Commission discussed Chapter 145 and the similarities between that and Chapter 138. It was decided that the Commission will discuss Chapter 145 at the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Barker opened the meeting to public comment.

1. Joe Aromando of Medford Lakes feels that the Historic District should not be expanded, rather it should be disbanded completely and a "Log Cabin Preservation Commission" should be formed. The goal is to preserve and protect the structures, there is nothing "historic" about it. he also feels the Commission needs to create a "flexibility" in regard to materials accepted for accessory parts and keep "core" components to wood only. Other materials for things like trim, soffits, fascia, etc. should be accepted because "we live in the woods." He agreed there is "no place for vinyl" on log cabins but it should be easier for residents to use more durable materials.

Hearing no further comment, Chairman Barker closed public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Collins motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Tragesser.

VOTE TO ADJOURN

	Moved	Seconded	Ayes	Nays	Absent	Abstain
Chairman Brad Barker			X			
Co-Chairman Mike Dzwil			X			
Member Danielle Byrne			X			
Member Donald Schroeder			X			
Member Shawn Collins	X		X			
Alternate 1 Joann Tragesser		X	X			
Alternate 2 Robin Birchenough					X	

