

PRESS RELEASE
MAYOR LOU LAMATINA
EMERSON, NJ
NOVEMBER 30, 2017

Emerson Mayor Lou Lamatina announced today the Borough's recent settlement with Fair Share Housing. Mayor Lamatina advised that "I am pleased to report that the Borough of Emerson has reached an agreement with Fair Share Housing to settle the pending lawsuit."

While the settlement is subject to court approval the Mayor noted that the agreement could not have been reached without the support of Council President Chris Knoller, and Councilmen Downing, Lazar and Falotico.

Mayor Lamatina said, "I want to specifically thank Council President Chris Knoller, Councilman Brian Downing, Councilman John Lazar and Councilman Gerry Falotico for recognizing that entering into this settlement was in the best interest of the Borough."

The Mayor also noted that the settlement when approved by the Court will:

- * protect the Borough from Builder's Remedy lawsuits through 2025;
- * limit multi-family development to the downtown and to a commercial district, to protect our existing single-family neighborhoods;
- * give our recent college graduates an affordable place to move back to their hometown upon graduation;
- * importantly, for our seniors, provide an affordable location in their community as they begin to "downsize" after selling their family homes;
- * keeps development away from the Emerson and Hackensack Golf courses; and
- * will lead to a substantial reduction in legal and expert fees that the Borough has been incurring.

The Mayor also noted that the settlement would provide a realistic opportunity for low and moderate-income families, such as single parents and borough employees to live in our community.

The Mayor also expressed his appreciation for the Borough's professionals, Municipal Attorney Wendy Rubinstein, Esq. and Borough Planner Brigitte Bogart for who were able to substantially reduce the number of residential units which Fair Share Housing was initially demanding.

"Through the efforts of our professionals, our Agreement with Fair Share will only require our community to provide a "Realistic Opportunity" to develop 53 affordable housing units before the year 2025." Mayor Lamatina said.

“We are providing that Realistic Opportunity through the following existing and proposed projects:

- Veteran’s Housing*
- Advancing Opportunities Group Home*
- Center for Hope and Safety Group Home*
- Emerson Grand*
- Block 419 Redevelopment

(*Already built)” the Mayor explained.

Adam Gordon, Esq., Associate Director of Fair Share Housing Center commented that, "We strongly support the settlement we have reached with Emerson, which will expand opportunities for working families in North Jersey while revitalizing the town's downtown business district and focusing new development serving a range of income levels near Emerson’s train station,"

Mr. Gordon also observed that "Emerson joins more than 150 towns across New Jersey, including 20 in Bergen County, who have reaffirmed their commitment to making our state a place that welcomes working families, seniors and people with disabilities."

The Mayor also noted that “While I am relieved that this ordeal and expense to our taxpayers is nearing an end, and the Borough will be protected from the threat of over- development, I remain perplexed at the State Legislature’s inability to reach a reasonable solution to the issue of affordable housing. The Council on Affordable Housing’s (“COAH”) failures, and the Legislature’s inability to fashion a solution, has cost municipalities thousands and thousands of dollars on attorneys and experts; monies that could have, and should have, been used to construct actual affordable units.

The actual Agreement can be found on the Borough’s website.

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