

Master Plan Workshop

BOROUGH OF LAVALLETTE

REORGANIZATION AND REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING BOARD

Wednesday, April 8, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.



I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by A. Cataline. It was initially stated that the meeting was an executive session, which was corrected by board members to clarify that it was a public workshop for the purpose of reviewing and creating the new master plan.

ROLL CALL:

Alex Barletta – present

Jennifer DeRienzo – present

Joseph Palinsky – present

John Bennett – present

Joanne Filippone – present

Thomas Restaino – present

Anthony Cataline – present

Jennifer Hartman-Sica – present

Mark Speaker - present

Mary Chyb – present

Vincent Marino – present

Also Present: Mr. T. Kunz, Esq.

II. Master Plan Report Style and Formatting

- James Clavelli presented a draft of the report style and format for the new master plan.
- The Board provided the following feedback on the proposed design:
 - **Colors:** The proposed yellow accent color was not favored, with members noting it resembled that of the state police.
 - The Board recommended **changing the yellow color to white** and using a lighter, "beachier" blue that more closely matches the official borough flag and water tower.
 - **Imagery:** Placeholder photos should be replaced with more recognizable borough landmarks. The **gazebo and the water tower** were suggested with which other members agreed.

II. Review of 2016 Master Plan: Land Use Element : Mr. Clavelli addressed the items on his agenda in the Land Use Element and stopped at the Circulation Element.

- James Clavelli initiated a detailed review of the goals, objectives, and recommendations from the 2016 Master Plan's Land Use Element to determine their current validity, status of completion, and need for amendment.
- **Objective: Promote and Expand the B-2 Downtown Business District**
 - Discussion included:

- Historical context, noting that the original B-2 zone was mapped incorrectly and that past efforts to secure funding for a supportive streetscape plan were unsuccessful.
- The Board noted that businesses have organically expanded along Route 35, outside the formal B-2 zone.
- **Decision:** The consensus was that a literal expansion of the B-2 zone is no longer the primary goal. The objective will be revised to **promote and cultivate business development more broadly**, including in the B-1 zone and beyond the existing B-2 district.
- The Board discussed the desired character of local businesses and related land use issues:
 - Several members expressed a desire for more small, "mom-and-pop" style businesses and essential services (e.g., a pharmacy) over national franchises.
 - High property values and the seasonal economy were identified as significant hurdles for smaller businesses.
 - A concern about commercial properties in the B-1 district being converted to residential duplexes, reducing retail space.
 - A debate ensued on whether to limit or prohibit new residential development along the Route 35 corridor to preserve it for commercial use.
 - Potential solutions were explored, such as allowing smaller retail spaces or "pop-up" shops within larger buildings.
 - The master plan could recommend new permitted uses to provide a legal basis for future zoning changes that would allow for such solutions.
- **Objective: Encourage the Adaptive Reuse and Rehabilitation of Older Houses**
 - **Decision:** This objective was determined to be **no longer valid**.
 - Current flood elevation requirements make it cost-prohibitive to raise an older home compared to tearing it down and building a new one. Members agreed that most homeowners now opt for new construction.
- **Proposed Ordinance Revisions from 2016 Plan**
 - **Groundwater Pumping:** A recommendation to regulate the pumping of groundwater for pool installation was deemed **still valid**. The Board agreed it should be pursued with "sensible technical solutions" to mitigate issues like sand and water runoff.
 - **Outdoor Kitchens:** A recommendation to add a definition for "outdoor kitchen facilities" was determined to be **no longer valid**. The Board intentionally uses the term "outdoor cooking facility" to avoid permitting a second kitchen on a property.

- **Liquor Licenses:** A recommendation to review restrictions on liquor licenses was also deemed **no longer valid**. The council had already reviewed the issue, held a public hearing, and decided against making changes.
- **Recommendation: Conversion of Seasonal Dwellings to Year-Round Housing**
 - The discussion clarified two distinct issues: the conversion of unheated seasonal cottages to year-round homes by adding heat, and the expansion of non-conforming properties (e.g., two houses on one lot).
 - **Decision:** The Board agreed that the recommendation remains valid but should be **strengthened and clarified** to address these separate circumstances, particularly to prevent the expansion of non-conforming uses except as strictly allowed by law.

Action Items

- **Revise the Master Plan report template** with a white accent color, a lighter blue, and images of the gazebo and water tower.
- **Draft new language for the Land Use Element** to reflect the goal of promoting and cultivating business development beyond the existing B-2 zone.
- **Distribute an electronic form to the board** to collect feedback on unresolved items from the 2016 plan.
- **Propose a new recommendation** for the board to consider classifying swimming pools as impervious surfaces.
- **Prepare a draft of public survey questions** for the board to review at the next meeting.
- **Contact the organizer of the June food truck festival** to arrange a public outreach table for the master plan process.
- **Submit individual ideas for master plan amendments** to the Board Secretary, for compilation before the next meeting.

Adjournment

Motion: Made by A.Barletta?, seconded by A. Cataline, to **adjourn the meeting**. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

The meeting concluded at 7:10 pm.

The next Master Plan Workshop meeting is scheduled for May 6, 2026.