

Housing Decision Likely to Have Impact On All NJ Municipalities

On Thursday, March 8, 2018 a judge in Mercer County, New Jersey ordered Princeton Township and West Windsor Township to plan for more low- and middle-income housing within their boundaries than they had argued they needed to provide for. This ruling has been long anticipated by experts and officials on all sides of the affordable housing issue. In her decision, Superior Court Judge Mary Jacobson favored the methodology endorsed by housing advocates when she concluded that the state should add 155,000 affordable housing units by 2025. While this number is less than housing advocates had sought, it is more than the towns wanted.

While her decision applies to only the two Mercer County towns, other municipalities have been awaiting the ruling as they struggle with how much affordable housing they must provide under the New Jersey Supreme Court's longstanding Mount Laurel cases and where it can and should be built. Kevin Walsh, Esq., with the housing advocate group Fair Share Housing Center that has been driving the litigations, said his group has reached settlements with approximately 190 municipalities on the number of housing units and where they will be built, leaving approximately 140 more to go. This latest ruling may now encourage additional settlements.