

James Higgins Officially on November Ballot for Hopewell Borough Council After Strong Community Support

Campaign Focused on Responsible Development, Local Business Support, Government Transparency, Fiscal Responsibility, and Community Engagement

HOPEWELL BOROUGH, NJ, UNITED STATES, August 12, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- James Higgins today [announced](#) that he will appear on the November 2026 ballot as an [Independent candidate](#) for Hopewell Borough Council, offering residents a [campaign](#) committed to responsible and intelligent development that includes affordable housing, transparent government, fiscal responsibility, support for local businesses, and greater public participation in municipal decision-making.

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James Higgins

A resident of New Jersey since 1973 and a Hopewell Borough resident for the past 12 years, Higgins said his

decision to run followed more than three years of regularly attending Borough Council meetings, studying local issues, and advocating for greater transparency, communication, and community engagement. During that time, many residents encouraged him to seek office because of his thoughtful involvement and willingness to ask difficult questions. After deciding to run, Higgins collected more than 40 percent above the required number of petition signatures in less than three weeks.

“I never imagined that I would run for public office,” Higgins said. “Like many residents, I kept saying someone needed to step forward. Eventually, I realized that maybe that someone should be me. I’m running as an Independent because my only obligation is to the people of Hopewell Borough. Our residents should have a choice this November.”

Higgins said Hopewell stands at an important crossroads. He believes the Borough can welcome new families, deliver affordable housing options, encourage responsible redevelopment, and strengthen its local economy while preserving the character, history and quality of life that residents value. He believes those goals are complementary when pursued through careful planning and meaningful public participation.

The issue that recently drew Higgins into local advocacy was the Hopewell 57 redevelopment project. While he supports development and adding affordable housing within our community, he also recognizes the need to develop the property thoughtfully, he believes the current Borough Council's process lacked meaningful community engagement, transparent communication, and a comprehensive review before significant redevelopment decisions were made. He believes residents should have been engaged earlier and given a meaningful opportunity to provide input before major changes involving density, parking, traffic, flooding, environmental impacts, infrastructure, emergency access, taxes, and other long-term community considerations were approved.

Looking ahead, Higgins said his campaign is equally focused on two additional redevelopment opportunities: the former lumberyard property

on Model Avenue and the former Castoro's property on East Broad Street. He believes these projects provide an opportunity to demonstrate a more collaborative process and ensure the concerns expressed by residents during Hopewell 57 are not repeated.

"We cannot have another Hopewell 57 mismanagement in our community. Projects must be better evaluated, engage the community earlier, and allow more public involvement," Higgins said. "My goal is not to stop development but to improve the process and ensure due diligence is conducted every step of the way. Residents deserve meaningful opportunities to participate before major decisions are made, not after the outcome has effectively been predetermined."

Higgins also pointed to the Borough's water system referendum as an example of the importance of citizen participation. He was involved with the community's petition effort that ensured residents had the opportunity to vote directly on one of the most significant municipal decisions in recent history. "The Council wanted to decide this without community input, we didn't let that happen." Higgins believes government is strongest when it actively seeks public involvement on consequential issues.

He also supports continued public discussion surrounding significant municipal investments and expenses, including the Borough's \$3.2M Department of Public Works building on land the town already owns. "I believe the taxpayers deserve a clearer understanding of long-term costs, priorities, and expected public benefits and financial impact."



James Higgins, Independent candidate for Hopewell Borough Council

Campaign Priorities

- Support responsible development that includes affordable housing while protecting neighborhoods, infrastructure, and the environment.
- Increase transparency and improve communication between Borough government and residents.
- Expand meaningful public engagement before major ordinances, redevelopment agreements, and significant capital projects are approved.
- Practice sound fiscal management and safeguard taxpayer resources.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of Borough ordinances to identify outdated, inconsistent, or unnecessarily burdensome regulations.
- Strengthen citizen committees, increase awareness of opportunities for residents to participate in local government.
- Support Hopewell's local businesses by reducing unnecessary barriers and encouraging economic vitality.
- Ensure every resident, property owner, business owner, and applicant is treated fairly, respectfully, and consistently.

"I want people to shop here, dine here, invest here, and build businesses here," Higgins said.

"Local government should be a partner in the success of our business community, not an obstacle. We need to better appreciate the people who have decided to be business owners in our town. They create jobs, provide services, and are community members as well."

"The most important part of any community is its people. We can embrace responsible growth, create affordable housing, strengthen our downtown, improve our infrastructure, and preserve what makes Hopewell special. My commitment is to listen carefully, ask thoughtful questions, and always act in the best interests of our residents, today and for generations to come."

About James Higgins

James Higgins has been a New Jersey resident since 1973 and has lived in Hopewell Borough for the past 12 years. He is an Independent candidate for Hopewell Borough Council in the November 2026 election. His campaign is focused on responsible development, affordable housing, transparent government, fiscal accountability, community engagement, and support for local businesses.

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