GUILFORD COUNTY
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Truist Building – McAdoo Conference Room
201 W. Market Street, Greensboro, NC 27401
October 8, 2025
6:00 PM

Call to Order

Chair Donnelly called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He asked staff to call the roll for those members present for the meeting.

I. Roll Call

The following members were in attendance in person for this meeting:

James Donnelly, Chair; David Craft, Vice Chair; Rev. Gregory Drumwright; Sam Stalder; Jason Little, Ryan Alston and Cara Buchanan

The following members were absent from this meeting:

Dr. Nho Thi Bui; and Guy Gullick

The following Guilford County staff were in attendance in person for this meeting:

J. Leslie Bell, Planning and Development Director; Jason Hardin; Planning and Development Deputy Director; Oliver Bass, Planning and Zoning Manager; Avery Tew, Senior Planner; Darby Terrell, Senior Planner; Samantha Lockwood, Senior Planner; Troy Moss, Planning Technician; Andrea Leslie-Fite, County Attorney; and Robert Carmon, Fire Marshal

II. Agenda Amendments

Jason Hardin stated that there are no amendments to the agenda this meeting.

III. Approval of Minutes: September 10, 2025

Chair Donnelly asked if there were any corrections or amendments to the minutes of the September 10, 2025 meeting. He found just a few typos and forwarded his comments and corrections to Mr. Bass for clarification. Reverend Drumwright requested an edit be made to the minutes reflecting his encouragement to Attorney Hodierne and her client that they engage the surrounding community. While he was in support of passing the request, he would have preferred that the developer (her client) would have been more interested in leveraging the input of the community. He will send an email to staff with his corrections. It was determined to hold the vote on approval of the minutes until later in the meeting.

Per his email, the comments from Reverend Drumwright should read, “Though I will be voting in support of this measure tonight, he would have hoped that Attorney Hodierne’s client would have been more open to the concerns stemming from the many voices of the community given their immensity and their engagement around this request. I encourage them to do so in the future.”

Mr. Craft moved to approve the September 10, 2025, minutes as amended, seconded by Mr. Stalder. The Board voted unanimously (7-0) in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Donnelly, Craft, Alston, Little, Stalder, Buchanan, Drumwright. Nays: None.)

IV. Rules and Procedure

Since there were no cases to be heard, Chair Donnelly did not go over the Rules and Procedures.

V. Continuance Requests

There were no continuance requests for the meeting.

VI. Old Business

None.

VII. New Business

Legislative Hearing Item(s)

Leslie Bell stated that some of this was handled with the Notice requirements text amendment several months ago and this text amendment has been a work in progress for the planning staff. These changes align the UDO text procedures with current practice and with NCGS 160D. Staff is now bringing it to the Board for review and a recommendation. He wanted to thank Jason Hardin and his team, Samantha, Darby, Oliver, and Troy because it has been a heavy lift to get this text amendment organized.

A. UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (UDO) TEXT AMENDMENT CASE #23-09-PLBD-00064: AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 2 (ADMINISTRATION), ARTICLE 3 (PERMITS AND PROCEDURES), ARTICLE 4 (ZONING DISTRICTS), ARTICLE 5 (DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS FOR INDIVIDUAL USES) ARTICLE 6 (GENERAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS), ARTICLE 8 (SUBDIVISIONS AND INFRASTRUCTURE STANDARDS), ARTICLE 9 (ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS), ARTICLE 12 (DEFINITIONS) OF THE UDO TO ADJUST ASSIGNED ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES AND PROCEDURES FOR DEVELOPMENT REVIEW CONSISTENT WITH NC GENERAL STATUES 160D FOR LEGISLATIVE, QUASI-JUDICIAL, AND ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS. (RECOMMENDED)

Samantha Lockwood stated that staff prepared text amendments to the Guilford County Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to Article 2, Article 3, Article 4, Article 5, Article 6, Article 8, Article 9, and Article 12 (Referenced as Subsection 2, Subsection 3, Subsection 4, Subsection 5, Subsection 6, Subsection 8, Subsection 9, and Subsection 12 respectively, in the County Code of Ordinances) that aligns the duties of the Planning Board and Technical Review

Committee (TRC) in accordance with current practice and NCGS 160D while removing the TRC as a decision-making authority under the UDO. The TRC would serve in an advisory role to the Planning and Development Director as established with these changes in the UDO. These revisions maintain and support the multi-disciplinary TRC review process, supporting thoroughness of development reviews while improving efficiency and adding clarity in the development review process. Additionally, the amendment includes revisions to terminology (e.g., changing substantial change to major change) for consistency with NCGS 160D (printed handouts were included in the Planning Board package which show the proposed amendments).

The proposed amendments are consistent with the Guiding Principles under the Future Land Use Framework for Sensible Growth under the Guiding Guilford Moving Forward Together Comprehensive Plan. The Vision states that "In order to house this growth, the County needs to begin implementing measures, policies, and regulations to ensure that future development patterns are reflective of the community's vision." This text amendment aligns the Unified Development Ordinance with this statement to streamlining County procedures for reviewing development applications.

Additionally, this proposal aligns with Policy H1 of the Attainable Housing Planning Themes in the Guiding Guilford Moving Forward Together Comprehensive Plan. Policy H1 states "Enable the creation of new housing units that will provide a mix of housing types that meet the needs of residents."

For subdivisions and site plans, there are several flow chart changes relating to the wording from "review and decision by TRC" to being "a review" by TRC. There is a review process change proposed with minor and exempt subdivisions. For exempt subdivisions and minor subdivisions with no street improvement, these plat submittals would begin with review of the final plat, instead of a preliminary plat, which reduces the number of submittals required from applicants. The intention is to shorten the process and eliminate the final 15-day review, which is not always necessary when all comments have already been addressed in the preliminary review stage if no improvements are proposed as a part of the proposed plat.

There are a few changes proposed to the noticing requirements. Currently, the UDO requires more extensive noticing than what is required by NCGS 160D. The proposed amendment aligns the County's notice requirements to those reflected in NCGS 160D. Though, it is department practice to still provide any noticing that is listed as option in the table of Section 3.2.

Staff recommends approval.

Discussion

Chair Donnelly stated that as he looks at the details under Street Name Changes, the only written notice, according to the Notice Table in Section 3.2, happens after the decision is made. He feels that the Board might not want to have people's street names changed without them having notice. It is his understanding that the nature of the petition is such that the petition will provide that notice for those individuals, so it doesn't need to be covered in the Ordinance. Ms. Lockwood stated that was correct.

Chair Donnelly opened the floor for the Public Hearing. There being no one to speak, the Public Hearing was closed by acclamation.

Mr. Craft moved to recommend approval of proposed text amendment Case #23-09-PLBD-00064. The proposed amendments are consistent with the Guiding Principles under the Future Land Use Framework for a sensible growth under Guilford County's Guiding Guilford Moving Forward Together Comprehensive Plan. Provisions state that in order to house this growth the County needs to begin implementing measures, policies and regulations to ensure the future development patterns are reflected in the community's vision. This text amendment aligns with the UDO in this statement to streamline County procedures for reviewing development applications. Additionally, this proposal aligns with Policy H1 of the Attainable Housing Planning Themes in the Guiding Guilford Moving Forward Together Comprehensive Plan. Policy H1 states "Enable the creation of new housing units that will provide a mix of housing types that meet the needs of residents." Mr. Little seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Donnelly, Drumwright, Little, Buchanan, Alston, Craft and Stalder. Nays: None.)

VIII. Other Business

Board Member Training:

A. Using the recently adopted Guilford County Moving Forward Together Comprehensive Plan for development and text amendment application decisions.

TEST REZONING CASE #25-01-PLBD-00104: RS-30, RESIDENTIAL TO RS-20, RESIDENTIAL: 5520 JOHN WASHINGTON RD

Oliver Bass stated that the intent of this process is to give the members some instructions on the foundational elements of the Comprehensive Plan that the Board uses to make their decisions. In terms of identifying consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and also to identify guidelines on the statement of reasonableness to be proposed consistent with what is in the Comprehensive Plan. Staff will do a mock presentation and will not give a full report, but will focus on those elements within the Comprehensive Plan pertaining to the Planning Board recommendation.

Darby Terrell presented the elements of the new Guiding Guilford Moving Forward Together Comprehensive Plan, starting with the new Planning Themes which are located throughout the document that focuses on areas and certain goals established by the Guilford County Board of Commissioners with input from county residents. During the presentation, Ms. Terrell stated that the Planning Themes would be a reference guide for the Planning Board Members to make their decisions when considering each goal statement, policy, and action items.

Next, Ms. Terrell discussed the Future Land Use Framework, which categorizes land use typologies that are further mentioned as Place Types within the Comprehensive Plan. The Place Types are different development types, patterns, and intensities observed within Guilford County. Before looking at a scale that is in the Comprehensive Plan, Ms. Terrell mentioned the guiding principles. The first element being to preserve certain areas within Guilford County with the focus to protect and preserve the natural environment. Agricultural lands, as well as rural communities, and historic resource properties are noted as prioritized for preservation. Secondly, there are areas to enhance. These are areas where there is already development and a focus for more development to occur in those places. The planning theme suggests considering small to medium-sized improvements over the long term to keep up with the

changing economics, technologies, consumer preferences and age-related deterioration. Lastly, there are areas to transform which are places that already have momentum but need additional investment to reimagine as new energized activity areas and they provide key locations for sites, such as new employment centers, regional shopping centers, entertainment areas, mixed use residential development areas. The plan includes a scale of intensity and density that stretches from the least dense/intense uses such as natural areas and preserves to more intense civic and industrial uses.

Ms. Terrell discussed Place Type descriptions which describes the overall characteristics related to the land use and type. The most differentiation is among residential land use types. The approach for wastewater would identify the anticipated system approach to the wastewater infrastructure and describe the load density intensity of land uses for specifically, private septic systems. The plan also discusses what water service would be the best approach for water access for those areas, as well as the general residential density. Finally, the plan discusses primary land uses as well as secondary land uses.

Ms. Terrell then discussed major areas or activity center nodes that are mentioned multiple times in the Future Land Use Map (FLUM), and those are described as: rural crossroads, neighborhood centers, major mixed-use center and regional employment centers. These are certain sections within the community where intersections are located that have historically brought activity for employment or gathering places such as small gas station, restaurants, or employment centers. A map was shown on the slide to indicate all the uses possible in these areas.

At this time, Ms. Terrell went through the mock Case #25-01-PLBD-00104, which will be reviewed for training using the previously discussed information. This site is located at 5520 John Washington Road, Guilford County Parcel# 112386 in Madison Township and is approximately 270 east of the intersection of Womack Drive and Leighann Road and comprises approximately 31.19 acres. This request is asking that the property be rezoned from RS-30 to RS-20. For the character of the area, the subject property is primarily single family residential, both streets that stub into the subject parcel serve lots in major single-family subdivisions developed under RS-30 zoning. Based on the minimum lot size allowed in RS-30 and RS-20 districts, the maximum density allowed will increase from 1.5 dwelling units per acre, to 2.2 dwelling units per acre. The existing land use of the property is undeveloped and the surrounding property to the north is single family residential, RS-30 zoned, to the south is undeveloped parcels zoned agriculture AG and RS-30 manufactured homes, as well as RS-40; undeveloped parcels zoned AG are to the east and west and is also single-family residential subdivision RS-30 zoned.

Ms. Terrell then displayed the FLUM to the Board members, which showed the discussed property and pointed out there was a rural crossroad located nearby. Ms. Terrell then defined certain terms on a Table that was displayed with the FLUM. The property being discussed is currently identified as residential on the map and the rezoning requested from RS-30 to RS-20. The property is near a scenic corridor which is U.S. 29 North. That overlay district does not affect this parcel. The watershed is NPDES and there is a requirement to have a 50-foot buffer around any identified streams.

The property is identified to be under the Residential Place Type. The Residential Place Type, per the Comprehensive Plan, are lands which typically consist of lots with varying sizes, which are primarily focused on low density and single-family residential uses. They do include existing

development and new areas that are currently undeveloped, which may be medium to high density uses.

Ms. Terrell stated the request to rezone the subject property from RS-30 to RS-20 is reasonable because it aligns with Guilford County's Comprehensive Plan Northeast Quadrant Future Land Use Map's Designation of Residential which encourages low to medium density near activity centers. It also aligns with the Comprehensive Plan's Attainable Housing Policy 1 and Action Items H1.1 H1.11 and H4.5 by providing low to medium density housing with a decreased minimum lot size for residential development while being near an activity center.

Staff recommendation is approval.

Chair Donnelly asked that the larger map be included in Board member's packages in the future as it is easier to see surrounding areas. Also, in the Consistency statement, there is Action H.4.5 but Policy H.4 is not included. He would like some clarification on that.

Attorney Leslie-Fite responded that it would be helpful to be more descriptive as that is always preferred. However, cautioned that being too specific can "box" the Board in should any case be appealed to Superior Court.

In response to a question posed by Rev. Drumwright, Mr. Bell stated that at intake for an application, staff is encouraged to provide enough information to the applicant that they are well informed and educated about their decision for the type of rezoning application (i.e., conventional or conditional) that they bring before the Planning Board. Staff does not want anyone to have things that were not explained to them in regard to their application.

TEST CONDITIONAL REZONING CASE #25-08-PLBD-00131: RS-40, RESIDENTIAL, TO CZ-AG, CONDITIONAL ZONING – AGRICULTURAL: 1804 PENNY ROAD

Avery Tew stated that the subject property is located at 1804 Penny Road (Guilford County Tax Parcel #158770 in Jamestown Township), approximately 500 feet north of the intersection of Penny Road and East Fork Road and comprises approximately 2.67 acres. Zoning History of Denied Cases: There is no history of denied cases.

This is a request to rezone the subject property from RS-40, Residential, to CZ-AG, Conditional Zoning – Agricultural, with the following conditions: Proposed Use Conditions: All uses permitted in the AG zoning district except: (1) Two-Family Dwelling (Twin Home or Duplex); (2) Caretaker Dwelling (Accessory); (3) Manufactured (HUD)/Mobile Home Dwelling (Class A & B); (4) Boarding House, 3 - 8 Residents; (5) Batting Cages, Outdoor; (6) Country Club with Golf Course; (7) Golf Course; (8) Private Club Recreation (incl. Indoor Batting Cages); (9) Swim and Tennis Club; (10) Shooting Range, Outdoor; (11) Place of Worship; (12) Daycare Center (Not In-Home); (13) Kennels or Pet Grooming; (14) Wireless Communication Tower – Non-Stealth Design; (15) Land Clearing & Inert Debris Landfill, Major; (16) Land Clearing & Inert Debris Landfill, Minor; and (17) Turkey Shoots.

Because the subject property is located in a Watershed Critical Area, the following uses are also prohibited: (1) Animal Feeder/Breeder; (2) Landscape and Horticultural Services; (3) Land Clearing & Inert Debris Landfill, Major.

Penny Road is classified as a Major Thoroughfare in the High Point Metropolitan Planning Organization's Comprehensive Transportation Plan. The Annual Average Daily Traffic for

Penny Road is 19,500 vehicles per the 2023 NCDOT traffic count. There are currently no known planned road improvements in the area. Any new development would be subject to an NCDOT driveway permit.

There is a local historic landmark, The Florence Female School Boarding House, located immediately southwest of the subject property across from the subject property. The requested rezoning is not anticipated to have any impact on this historic resource.

Per the Guilford County Comprehensive Plan, the Residential land use classification represents lands that typically consist of lots of varying sizes that are in a grid or curvilinear pattern and primarily consist of low-density, single-family residential uses. They include both existing development and new areas that are currently undeveloped, which may experience development in the form of medium and high-density uses in areas where municipalities continue to grow outward into the county or along primary transportation corridors.

The requested rezoning is consistent with the Future Land Use Map classification of Residential because the uses permitted in the proposed zoning district would be compatible with the low-density residential development envisioned within this classification. Specifically, the Residential land use classification is intended to accommodate primarily single-family detached dwellings and duplexes, both of which would be permitted under the proposed rezoning.

The request to rezone the subject property from RS-40 to CZ-AG is reasonable because the uses permitted under the proposed district would be largely compatible with development on adjoining properties and could benefit the surrounding area by enhancing access to fresh food, if used for agriculture, or by providing essential services. Potentially incongruous uses permitted under the AG district either (1) would be excluded from the proposed CZ-AG district through the use conditions offered by the applicant, (2) would be prohibited because the property is located in a Watershed Critical Area, or (3) would only be permitted with an approved Special Use Permit. The subject property's size, 2.67 acres, will also limit the potential scale of certain uses, such as agricultural uses, to an extent compatible with the surrounding area. Finally, the proposed CZ-AG zoning district is consistent with the Future Land Use Map classification of Residential.

The proposed rezoning is consistent with the Future Land Use Map classification of Residential. Therefore, if the request is approved a Future Land Use Map amendment to Rural Living will not be required. If considered to be inconsistent, because the use is permitted in the proposed zoning district, such as AG, or inconsistent with the envisioned classification of residential, it would be inconsistent. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the request.

Chair Donnelly thanked everyone for all their help and hard work on the Comprehensive Plan. He stated that it is nice to see how that language follows through and will be available to everyone to help guide decisions regarding long-range planning.

B. Proposed 2026 Planning Board Meeting and Submittal Schedule

Mr. Hardin noted a change in the meeting date for the November 2026 meeting, as it will be on the 10th of November because of Veteran's Day.

Mr. Craft moved to approve the 2026 meeting schedule, as submitted, seconded by Ms. Buchanan. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the motion. (Ayes: Donnelly, Drumwright, Little, Buchanan, Alston, Craft and Stalder. Nays: None.)

Chair Donnelly announced that this will be the last meeting that Attorney Leslie-Fite will be with the Board. She has accepted a position as the City Attorney for the City of Charlotte, NC. He offered his congratulations and his appreciation for her work supporting this Board.

Attorney Leslie-Fite stated that Planning is one of her favorite areas of law to work with and this Board is a passionate group of leaders who are committed to working through the process. She thinks that it is critical for ensuring that communities are strong and resilient in years to come. She stated Matt Mason, former Chief Deputy County Attorney, is enjoying his retirement but has agreed to come back as a retiree callback to help this Board.

IX. Adjourn

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.