

Board Chair:
Rodney Cheek

Planning Director:
Matthew Hoagland



Commissioners' Meeting Room
124 W Elm Street
Graham, NC 27253
May 8, 2025, at 7:00 PM

ALAMANCE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD AGENDA

Virtual-

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1QADkhkyUpac9rMs42imjA>

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Cheek called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Rodney Cheek, Willam Henry Vines, Amie Perkins, Richard Tom King, Henry Chandler, Stephen Dodson

Absent: John Jordan, Vice Chair Lee Isley, Commissioner John Paisley

Staff Present: Planning Director Matthew Hoagland, Planner 1 Keyshawn Haith, Assistant County Attorney Michelle Horn, Environmental Health Director Rebecca Rosso, Environmental Health Specialist Ryan Langley

III. APPROVAL OF PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

Mr. King noted that he had a few minor corrections regarding the public comments from the last meeting, Agricultural Food Operations from the previous ordinance draft, and a duplicate of the definitions from the last meeting's materials.

Mr. Vines made a motion to accept the minutes with those changes. Mr. King seconded, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS*

None

V. BOARD/COMMISSIONER RESPONSES

None

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. Draft Rural Preservation Ordinance Review

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Mr. Hoagland reported that he did not have any new updates regarding the draft ordinance. However, he did receive a few suggested revisions from Mr. King. Board members were encouraged to ask questions or raise concerns regarding the draft.

Mr. Chandler directed the board's attention to page 3 of the ordinance, specifically Section 5.4 concerning land use restrictions. Further discussion followed regarding Section 5.4.2 on page 5. The board considered a proposal to increase the minimum lot size for residential cluster subdivisions in the Agricultural District from 8,000 square feet to between 15,000 and 16,000 square feet.

A motion was made to revise Section 5.4.2 to increase the minimum lot size from 8,000 square feet to 15,000 square feet for residential cluster subdivisions within Agricultural Districts. During the discussion, Mr. Hoagland was asked whether he believed 15,000 square feet would be a limiting factor. He cautioned against making such a change in a vacuum. He mentioned, as an example, thinking about considering reducing the required open space as an offset to increasing the lot size.

Mr. Hoagland also raised a concern that increasing the minimum lot size might conflict with anticipated legislation from the General Assembly, which may require parcels with access to public or community water and sewer to allow a density of four to six residences per acre. The board then discussed alternative square footage requirements that might better align with proposed legislative changes.

Chairman Cheek recognized Mr. Chandler's motion to adopt a 15,000 square foot minimum lot size for residential cluster subdivisions in Agricultural Districts was approved with three votes in favor and two opposed. Mr. Cheek did not vote.

Mr. Chandler also requested flipping the allowances for colleges, universities, and vocational schools on the table of uses. Mr. Cheek asked Mr. Hoagland if a vote was needed but he responded that he thought a consensus would be fine.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Draft Subdivision Ordinance Amendments Review

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Mr. Hoagland first made note that he had corrected a few minor type-o errors from the draft ordinance presented at the last meeting. He then presented the following summary of the draft subdivision ordinance sections:

Index: Added for organizational purposes and consistency with the rest of the document.

Section 6.9.1: Swapped out old section for the Purpose and Goals of the ordinance. This section sets the table for why this ordinance exists and what the county is trying to accomplish by enacting these regulations.

Section 6.9.2: Swapped out old section for Application and Regulations. This section essentially defines what a subdivision is and notes the legal parameters surrounding property subdivision and recording.

Section 6.9.3: This section is essentially an exact copy of the old Section 6.9.1. and matches the exceptions set out in NCGS 160D-802(a).

Section 6.9.4: This new section features existing language from the current ordinance but places it closer to the beginning of the document since it comes after the sections detailing what a subdivision is and what is exempt from the ordinance. This section essentially tells the subdivider that an approved plat does not automatically guarantee approved building permits or accepted streets into the NCDOT system.

Section 6.9.5: This section simply allows for variances or appeals related to subdivisions and is directly in line with state law and the Board of Adjustment procedures of Article 2.

Section 6.9.6: This section on "Aggregation" of subdivisions would provide clearer language around the phasing of subdivision plans and time parameters on them.

Section 6.9.7: this section simply spells out the consequences for violating the subdivision regulations specifically transferring land without the work first being done by a licensed North Carolina surveyor.

Section 6.9.8: This section allows for the presale of lots, which is more common for phased subdivisions. Text here is in line with NCGS 160D-807(c).

Section 6.9.9: These "General Requirements" mostly already exist in the current ordinance and are just reorganized together into this section.

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Section 6.9.10: This section on Environmental Protection Measures features regulations that are largely in the existing ordinance. However, these changes clarify the definition of “Marginal Land” and add a requirement that notes be placed on a plat if properties are within a flood hazard area. This section also keeps the 50-foot vegetative buffer requirement that the board proposed in last year’s draft. Next, subsection 6.9.10.4 includes provisions that stormwater does not create erosion, that it “keep flows below erosive velocities,” and that perpetual operation and maintenance plans be included with covenants on properties within the subdivision. Finally, subsection 6.9.10.5 would clarify that stream buffers be measured from the top of the bank of a stream.

Section 6.9.11: Features much of the existing regulations around public and private roads but adds more detail for things like postal service cluster box units, Fire Code Road Standards, and the distinctions between Class 1 and Class 2 private roads, and the perpetual maintenance of private roads.

Section 6.9.12: This section on “Design Standards for Lots” features much of the same regulations that are in place today. You will notice that the minimum lot size requirements do not match the 5- or 2-acre minimums we discussed at the last meeting. That is because the issue was still unresolved at the end of our last meeting. We also added clarification that only one principal dwelling may be placed on a single lot. This is an issue we deal with quite a lot.

Section 6.9.13: Types of Subdivisions: This section more clearly defines the difference between major and minor subdivisions. Major subdivisions would be those of 15 or more lots while minors would be 14 or less. Major subdivisions are then broken into three categories: conventional, cluster, and density subdivisions. Conventional subdivisions would simply match the minimum lot size of the district they’re in; 5 acres in the Agricultural District as an example. Clusters could feature lots as small as 8,000 sq. ft. and must reserve at least 25% of the original tract as open space. Density subdivisions would feature lots where lots could vary in size but where the average of lots would match the minimum size in that district; again 5 acres in Agricultural for ex

Section 6.9.14: Cluster Subdivisions: Spells out all the details related to Cluster Subdivisions.

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Section 6.9.15: Consolidates all of the approval procedures into one place. Right now, they are in two different sections of the ordinance.

Mr. Hoagland concluded by saying that he would like the board members to take this home and pour over it like they had for previous documents. They will then have the chance to suggest more edits during the June meeting. Mr. Hoagland said he envisions the board finalizing this process during the July meeting once the commissioners have finished with the budget.

The board discussed stormwater runoff for impervious surfaces for cluster subdivisions. Mrs. Perkins asked about capping the amount of impervious surface created by cluster subdivision open space and asked if that could be added.

The board also discussed the required buffer strips in two sections of the proposed ordinance and how there seems to be conflicting language. After lengthy discussion, Mr. Hoagland said that he will edit the draft for the next meeting to simplify and clarify these rules.

There was also some discussion about the "Presale of Lots" provision in the ordinance. Mr. Hoagland mentioned that it did now look outdated and probably needs to be address and made current.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS/DISCUSSION

Mr. Hoagland mentioned again that the plan is to finish this process after the commissioners have finished the budget. He also introduced Mr. Keyshawn Haith, the new Planner 1 with the county.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Chandler made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Vines. Vote was unanimous.