

Board Chair:
Rodney Cheek

Planning Director:
Matthew Hoagland



Commissioners' Meeting Room
124 W Elm Street
Graham, NC 27253
April 10, 2025 at 7:00 PM

ALAMANCE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

Virtual-

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Cheek called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Chairman Rodney Cheek, V. Chair Lee Isley, Henry Vines, Tom King, Henry Chandler, Ernest "Smokey" Bare, Amie Perkins.

Absent: Stephen Dodson, Mac Jordan, Commissioner John Paisley

Staff Present: Planning Director Matthew Hoagland, Planner II Ian Shannon, Assistant County Manager Brian Baker, Assistant County Attorney Michelle Horn

III. APPROVAL OF PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

Mr. Cheek asked if all board members had time to look over the March 13, 2025 Regular Meeting minutes. Mr. Bare made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Mr. Vines. Minutes were approved unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS*

Mr. Philip Morgan said he had prepared any comments but that he had been looking at the changes for mobile home parks. He thinks the new changes would be limiting affordable housing by removing them from agricultural districts. He thinks lot sizes are still too large and will cause issues when people want to sell land later or give to family member.

V. BOARD/COMMISSIONER RESPONSES

None.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. Draft Table of Land Uses Review
2. Draft Table of Land Uses Definitions

Mr. Hoagland said that since these two old business items are really interrelated then he could address both at the same time unless there was an objection from the board.

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First, he reported that he had Look into Elon's possible expansion plans toward Ossipee. He found out that this area is part of an outdated plan from Elon and they have no firm plans to expand here. Also, regarding 1/3 of a home being the limit for max usage of a home occupation business, he added this as the limit for usage under the new "Customary Home Occupation" definition. He said he had also talked to inspections about when certain A.D.A. requirements take effect. According to the chief inspector, if a business is open to the public it is supposed to have A.D.A. compliant ramps and other similar features, including home businesses.

He said he had also added home-based business as an accessory use to the principal use and set regulations around that. He also allowed home-based businesses in RR and ST districts in table of uses. He also removed Mobile Home Parks from the AG district. He added 1/2 mile separation for Family Care Homes.

Mr. Hoagland also explained that he decided to keep the agricultural uses listed in the table because not all agricultural operations may also meet the criteria to be exempt from zoning regulations. For example, a community garden in the Mill Village district may not meet the minimum lot size requirement for tax deferment but it would still be shown as allowed in this plan.

He also made the change to allow Clubs, Lodges, and Banquet Halls to be given a PA or SU label. He also changed it so that "Government Services, Admin" is no longer in the AG districts. He said for Airport Facilities he had changed the use to requiring a special use permit and added a minimum lot size of 40 acres to table of uses.

He said he created new use for "Food Operations incidental to Ag. Operations" and allowed in the AG districts as well as created a new definition for the use. He also moved "Adult Store/Sex Business" to the Recreation & Entertainment category. He changed Recycling Drop-Off Station to require landscaping/screening in AG and allowed in RR.

He concluded by saying that even though he had landscaping for this use and a variety of uses it is one thing he would like the board to discuss and give some guidance on. If certain landscaping is going to be required, then it would likely require quite a bit more detail somewhere in the ordinance, like an entire section on landscaping regulations.

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Mrs. Perkins asked a question temporary vs. permanent fairgrounds and the 96 hour requirement. The board had a lengthy discussion about fairground regulations and Mr. Hoagland concluded the discussion by seeing if there is a distinction and if there are any state requirements. He said he can certainly extend the 96-hour time frame if these events are longer and could also name something other than fairgrounds.

Regarding the definitions in Old Business, he had added: ag. food operation, the ½ mile separation of family care homes, added clarifications for home-based business and added customary home occupation.

The board then discussed hypothetical regulations surrounding home-based businesses and customary home occupations.

Mr. Vines asked if there's anything on here that limits the environmental impact of business like car painting booths. Mr. Hoagland said he did not know if inspections would even allow an outdoor paint booth like that. Mr. Baker said he thought air impact is monitored by the state, not the county. If it is noxious to neighbors then there could be a private lawsuit.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Draft Rural Preservation Ordinance Review

Mr. Hoagland presented the following summary of the draft ordinance sections:

Index – Added in same format as all other draft ordinances

Section 5.1 – Establishes local government authority and sets out the purpose and goals of the ordinance.

Section 5.2 – Specifies the jurisdiction to which these regulations would apply.

Section 5.3 – Explains how and why bona fide farm operations would be exempt from the ordinance.

Section 5.4 – Establishes the various land use districts that we have covered in recent meetings; lot size regulations corresponding to those districts, and the permitting process for project approval.

Section 5.5 – Details exactly what the Mill Villages are and the form of developments which would be allowed there. In particular, Section 5.5.2 features photos of existing structures within the county so that future developers will know what types of design elements will be desired. Section 5.5.3 establishes a permitting review process very similar to Section 5.4. However, this subsection also establishes that the Planning Board will sit as the Alamance County Appearance

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Commission which will evaluate the characteristics of a proposed development within the Mill Village districts and make either a Recommendation of Approval or Denial prior to construction of the project.

Section 5.6 – Establishes the Table of Uses, which we covered during our last meeting. Any changes to the table since then were covered earlier under Old Business.

Section 5.7 – Incorrectly labeled as 5.8. This section establishes the district map which we've looked at in recent meetings as well as where it should be kept, how it should be interpreted, and how it should be amended.

The board had a lengthy discussion about the proposed regulations, especially lot sizes and subdivision types in each proposed district.

In conclusion, the board agreed to review the ordinance between tonight and the next meeting and to come back with questions, comments, and proposed changes. Mr. Cheek said they need to give some serious thought to deciding what size lots they would like to see in each of the districts as well as the types of subdivisions.

Mr. Hoagland said that was all that he had for new business.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS/DISCUSSION

Mr. Hoagland informed the board that Ian has taken a new job with private firm in Roanoke, Virginia and that his last day with the county will be tomorrow, Friday the 11th. Mr. Hoagland thanked Ian for all his hard work and help with the department and said that he will truly miss having him around. He informed the board that he has been in hiring process for a while for the vacant Planner I position and now for the Planner II job as well. He said he does have someone starting on short term contract basis and a full-time employee scheduled to start in early May.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Bare made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Isley. The vote to adjourn was unanimous.

Adjourned at 8:16