



**CITY OF SOUTHPORT
PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
223 E BAY ST SOUTHPORT
NC 28461**

May 15, 2025
6:00 PM

Present Members: Chair Sue Hodgkin
Vice Chair Kevin Locklin
Fred Fiss, Will Hewett, John Bove, Larry Ashley, Bob Lambert

Staff Present: Maureen Meehan, Planning Services Director
Wendell Biddle, City Planner
ChyAnn Ketchum, Public Information Officer

- A. Chair Hodgkin called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM
- B. Mr. Hewett gave the invocation.
- C. Chair Hodgkin led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- D. **Approval of Agenda**
A motion to approve the agenda was provided by Mr. Hewett and seconded by Mr. Ashley. **The motion passed unanimously.**
- E. **Public Comment**
A motion to go into public comment was made by Mr. Hewett and seconded by Mr. Ashley. **The motion passed unanimously.**

There was no public comment.

A motion to go out of public comment was made by Mr. Bove and seconded by Mr. Hewett. **The motion passed unanimously.**

F. Old Business

1. **ZTA-25-03: Zoning Text Amendment – Conditional Zoning Standards [Maureen Meehan]**
Director Meehan next presented the zoning text amendment application ZTA-25-03, submitted by East West Partners Management Company, Inc. and Bald Head Island Limited, LLC. She presented the proposed amendment, which seeks to revise Section

2.11 of the City's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) governing Conditional Rezoning, along with associated changes to Appendix A regarding submission requirements.

Director Meehan explained that the proposed text amendment would repeal the existing Conditional Rezoning section and replace it with revised standards applicable to both residential and nonresidential conditional rezoning applications. She noted that the current amendment originated from extensive discussions held at the Board's April 17, 2025 meeting, and that the May 2, 2025 Planning Board workshop provided an opportunity for members to review the revised language, evaluate prior staff proposals from 2023-2024, and discuss various issues raised, including written comments submitted by Planning Board member, Mr. Bove.

Director Meehan outlined the principal changes included in the proposed amendment. The revised language would allow conditional rezonings from any zoning district except Open Space, permit applicants to propose custom dimensional and development standards, and streamline the procedural requirements by incorporating the existing processes for UDO Text and Zoning Map Amendments under Section 2.10 and NCGS 160D-703(b). Appendix A would also be reformatted and expanded to include more detailed submission requirements, including the addition of stormwater plans, development schedules, and detailed utility plans for major subdivisions.

Director Meehan summarized several new provisions resulting from Planning Board discussions and recommendations from the UDO Review Committee, which met on May 7, 2025. Among these additions were requirements for pre-application meetings with the UDO Administrator, mandatory Technical Review Committee (TRC) meetings, a required minimum of 20% open space, procedures for handling major modifications after the public input meeting, and the inclusion of more detailed submission items in Appendix A.

The Board also discussed broader planning considerations supporting the amendment. Director Meehan emphasized that the amendment aligns with principles of smart growth and traditional neighborhood development, as identified in the City's 2014 CAMA Core Land Use Plan, including efficient land use, full utilization of public infrastructure, mixed-use development, and increased public participation in the planning process. She reviewed several specific policies from the Land Use Plan which support the proposal, noting that the conditional rezoning tool offers flexibility not achievable under conventional zoning and allows for site-specific conditions that address both community concerns and developer needs.

Chair Hodgkin called for a motion to approve the revised Conditional Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA-25-03) and to forward the item to the Board of Aldermen for consideration and adoption into the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).

Mr. Ashley made the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Fiss. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Hodgkin read the consistency statement.

2. **CZ-25-01: Waterway Community – Conditional Rezoning Application [Maureen Meehan]**
Next was the application for Conditional Rezoning Case CZ-25-01, submitted by East West Partners Management Company, Inc. on behalf of Bald Head Limited, LLC. Director Meehan presented the proposal, which requests a conditional rezoning map amendment for approximately 47.61 acres located in and adjacent to the Indigo Plantation subdivision.

The request would rezone nineteen separate parcels from their current classifications of R-10 and PUD to a new conditional zoning district, CZ-01.

Director Meehan explained that the conditional rezoning includes a master development plan, proposed development standards, and a draft development agreement, which would ultimately be adopted separately by the Board of Aldermen. The Planning Board's recommendation at this stage pertained only to the rezoning request itself. Director Meehan also noted that the properties are located within the corporate limits of the City of Southport and designated as "Medium Density Residential" on the City's Future Land Use Map, with portions falling within areas of medium and high suitability on the Land Suitability Map of the 2014 CAMA Land Use Plan.

Director Meehan outlined that the proposed Waterway Community is intended as a mixed-use development that incorporates a variety of housing types and limited non-residential uses. The proposal includes a maximum of 199 residential units across different housing types, including small lot single-family homes, duplexes, townhomes, and multi-family dwellings. Non-residential development is capped at 10,000 square feet. A minimum of 20% of the site will be preserved as open space, which may include wetlands, floodplains, and the marina basin.

Planning staff reviewed the proposed dimensional standards, parking requirements, landscaping, pedestrian infrastructure, street network, and stormwater management provisions contained in the application. Director Meehan explained that traffic impacts have been analyzed through a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) previously completed for the project, with recommendations from NCDOT to be incorporated into final development plans.

During previous discussions, staff addressed several questions that had been raised during the Planning Board's May 2, 2025 workshop session. These included clarifications on the calculation of wetlands as part of open space, the possibility of requiring performance bonds (limited by statute), options for more restrictive stormwater controls, parking ratios based on engineering analysis, and permitted research and development uses. Director Meehan indicated that these matters had been addressed in the submitted application and supplemental materials.

Director Meehan advised that the proposed rezoning was consistent with multiple policies of the 2014 CAMA Core Land Use Plan, including Policies 2.1, 2.4, and 2.11, which support mixed-use development, diversification of housing types, preservation of environmental features, and providing neighborhood-scale services to reduce traffic congestion. She recommended that the Planning Board adopt the provided consistency statement and forward a recommendation of approval to the Board of Aldermen.

During Board discussion, Mr. Ashley questioned if the height could be reduced from the 45 & 55 feet to the current city standards.

A motion to approve the plan was given by Mr. Bove and seconded by Mr. Locklin.

Mr. Ashley then made a motion to amend the previous motion by adding that the proposed building height be reduced from 45 feet and 55 feet to comply with the current height standards as outlined in the City's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). TMr. Hewett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Ashley then reads the consistency statement.

G. New Business

1. SUB-25-01: Deep Point Marina – Preliminary Plat Application for Major Subdivision [Maureen Meehan]

The preliminary plat application for the Deep Point Marina Major Subdivision (SUB-25-01) was presented and discussed. Director Maureen Meehan introduced the request submitted by Pelican Real Property, LLC, both the applicant and property owner. Director Meehan explained that the request is for approval of a major subdivision preliminary plat to subdivide land located at 1301 Ferry Road, identified as Brunswick County Parcel ID 2380000301. The property consists of approximately 18.93 acres and is zoned Business District (BD).

Director Meehan reviewed the history of the property, noting that Deep Point Marina previously received Planned Building Group development approval in 2007. That approval combined the Bald Head Island passenger and contractor facilities into a single ferry terminal and included compliance with all Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) standards, such as required setbacks, building height, parking, access points, utilities, sewer and water service, stormwater management, signage, and landscaping. All required infrastructure and site improvements currently exist on the property. She further noted that an exempt plat was approved in 2020 to create two parcels, and this current request pertains to the subdivision of one of those parcels.

Director Meehan clarified that this preliminary plat application is strictly for the division of land and does not involve any new construction or development. Any future development on the subdivided parcels will require submission and approval of amendments to the existing major site plan in accordance with the UDO. The subdivision proposal seeks to divide Parcel 2380000301 into three tracts, designated as Tract 1, Tract 3, and Tract 6, as illustrated on the preliminary plat included in the application materials.

Director Meehan explained that the application had been reviewed for completeness and compliance with all applicable provisions of the City of Southport Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and that the application met all standards required for preliminary plat approval. As this is classified as a major subdivision, it requires review and recommendation by the Planning Board, with final approval to be made by the Board of Aldermen.

Chair Hodgkin called for a motion to approve the Preliminary Plat Application submitted by Pelican Real Property and to forward the item to the Board of Aldermen for consideration.

Mr. Ashley made the motion, which was seconded by Mr. Hewett. The motion passed unanimously.

2. SUB-25-02: Deep Point Marina – Preliminary Plat Application for Major Subdivision [Maureen Meehan]

Director Meehan presented the Preliminary Plat Application submitted by Bald Head Limited, LLC and Bald Head Transportation, Inc., on behalf of property owner Bald Head Limited, LLC, for the subdivision of Parcel 2380000302, located at 1301 Ferry Road.

Director Meehan explained that the application is a request to subdivide an existing 52.6-acre parcel located within the Business District (BD) zoning district, adjacent to the NCDOT Southport–Fort Fisher Ferry terminal and the Landing Subdivision.

Director Meehan noted that the request is for the division of land only and includes no proposed development at this time. The existing infrastructure—including ingress/egress, utilities, water/sewer, stormwater management, signage, landscaping, setbacks, and parking—was approved in 2007 through a Planned Building Group development approval and is currently in place. Director Meehan added that a previous exempt plat review in 2020 resulted in the separation of the original tract into two parcels, and that this particular application pertains to what is now considered “Parcel 02.”

Director Meehan further clarified that the proposal is to divide the parcel into six separate tracts, identified as Tract 2, Tract 4, Tract 5, Tract 7, Tract 8, and Tract 9, as highlighted on the submitted preliminary plat. She stated that any future development on these parcels would be subject to an amendment to a major site plan and reviewed under the requirements of the City’s Unified Development Ordinance (UDO).

She concluded her presentation by stating that the application had been reviewed by staff and deemed complete, meeting all requirements for a Preliminary Plat under Section 2.8 of the UDO. Staff recommended approval and requested that the Planning Board forward a recommendation to the Board of Aldermen for final decision.

A motion was made by Mr. Ashley to accept staff’s recommendation for approval of the Preliminary Plat Application (SUB-25-02) submitted by Bald Head Limited, LLC and Bald Head Transportation, Inc., and to forward the application to the Board of Aldermen for final consideration. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hewett. The motion passed unanimously.

H. Other Business

1. Planning Services Director Updates [Maureen Meehan]

Director Meehan provided the Planning Board with an update on the latest legislative changes relevant to planning and development.

Vice Chair Locklin requested an update regarding the mural and sign violation at Café Koa. Director Meehan stated that she had spoken with the property owner, who indicated they were in the process of coming into compliance. She noted that staff are continuing to monitor the situation and will follow up to ensure that the necessary corrections are made in accordance with the City’s sign ordinance.

2. Planning and Zoning Update [Wendell Biddle]

City Planner Wendell Biddle provided updates on current development activity and planning matters in the City of Southport:

115 E. Moore Street – Ocean Outfitters Development

Mr. Biddle informed the Board that a building permit application had been submitted for

115 E. Moore Street. He reminded members that Brandon Vannoy, of Ocean Outfitters, intends to construct a new building on the site of the former Thai Peppers restaurant. The proposed development is a two-story, 6,000 square foot structure that will serve as retail and storage space. The upper level is expected to remain undeveloped for the foreseeable future.

Mr. Biddle clarified that the project does not require major site plan review and therefore will not come before the Planning Board for approval. However, staff will continue to monitor the project and provide updates until development is complete.

Right-of-Way (ROW) Ordinance Enforcement and Exemptions

Mr. Biddle reported that staff have issued follow-up courtesy letters to property owners who have not yet come into compliance with the amended Right-of-Way ordinance. He provided printed copies of the letter for the Board's review.

Since the initial round of letters issued in February, staff have collaborated with the Right-of-Way Committee to develop exemption standards for the ordinance. These exemptions, listed at the bottom of page two and on page three of the letter, include:

Specialized Events Text Amendment

Mr. Biddle informed the Board that the proposed Specialized Events Text Amendment was recently presented to the Board of Aldermen. He explained that the amendment was initiated by staff in an effort to allow existing commercial developments the ability to host specialized events, such as weddings. The proposal included amendments to:

1. Existing on-grade pavers
 2. Hardened structures that support earth or infrastructure
 3. Staff discretion, with City Manager approval, to evaluate and determine the extent of ROW infractions
- **Table 3.1** of the UDO (to permit the use)
 - **Section 3.6.Q** (to create specific use standards)
 - **Section 3.6.A.5** (to allow a temporary use permit for oversight)
 - **Article 8** (to include definitions for the proposed use)

Mr. Biddle noted that the inspiration for the amendment originated from a Bed & Breakfast proposal received in June 2024. However, he reported that the proposed amendment was not well received by the Board of Aldermen, and it is likely that the matter will return to the Planning Board for further discussion later this summer.

He outlined the key concerns expressed by the Aldermen:

- The proposal was found to be too complex and confusing
- It created potential burdens on residential districts

- There was insufficient clarity about enforcement responsibilities
- The amendment did not provide a mechanism for neighbors to object to nearby events
- Overall, the Aldermen felt the proposal represented an overreach by planning staff

3. Liason Update [Alderman Frank Lai]

Liaison Frank Lai commended the board for their dedication and the quality of their work, stating that they had done a great job throughout the process.

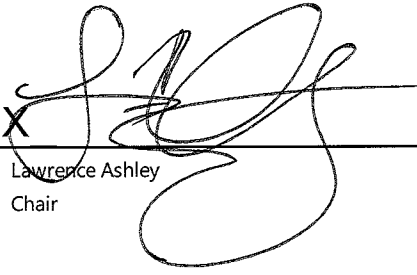
I. **Announcements**


Chair Hodgkin encouraged everyone to attend Southport Arts in May-nia, taking place on the Brunswick Community College lawn on Saturday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The event is a collaborative effort between Downtown Southport Inc., Brunswick Community College, the Southport Unity Committee, the Southport Garden Club, and the Caswell Avenue Community Garden.

J. **Adjourn**

Chair Hodgkin called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Hewett made the motion, which Mr. Ashley seconded. **The motion passed unanimously.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:11 PM.

X 
Lawrence Ashley
Chair

X 
Tori Deviney
City Clerk

