



**PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD
MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2026
PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

The Planning and Zoning Board met on the above date at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall Assembly Room, with Chairman Gregory Monroe presiding. The following were present:

Gregory Monroe, Chairman
Douglas R. Kilian, Vice Chairman
Anthony Bell, Member
Domini Cunningham, Alternate Member
Brandy Daniels, Member
Darlene Gardner, Member
James Godfrey Jones, Member
Henry Hostetler, ETJ Member
Morris Luton, Member
Michael Weldin, Member (absent)
Stephen Penn, Planning and Economic Development Director
Tristyn Daughtry, Economic Development Planner
Donald Harvey, Town Clerk

CALL TO ORDER: The Winterville Planning and Zoning Board meeting was called to order on Monday, April 20, 2026, at 7:00 PM at the Winterville Town Hall Assembly Room, 2571 Railroad Street, Winterville, NC 28590.

WELCOME: The Chair welcomed all board members and members of the audience in attendance.

EXCUSED ABSENCES: Planning and Economic Development Director Penn reported that no notices of absence had been received.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Motion by Member Jones and second by Member Luton to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously, 9-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Minutes of January 20, 2026, meeting were presented for approval.

Motion by Vice Chair Kilian and second by Member Jones to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2026, Planning and Zoning Board meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously, 9-0.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Vernon Crossing Rezoning.

Planning and Economic Development Director Penn presented the Vernon Crossing rezoning request. He noted that the subject property was formerly known as Waterford Crossing, which had been submitted as a rezoning request in 2023 and was denied by both the Planning and Zoning Board and Town Council. The 13.48-acre site is located on Railroad Street Extension, between the intersections of Worthington Street and Vernon White Road and is currently zoned Agricultural Residential (AR). The applicant, represented by Ward and Smith, is requesting rezoning to an R-6 Conditional District.

The proposed rezoning includes eight conditions: all lots shall be used exclusively for single-family detached residential homes; all lots shall contain a minimum of 8,000 square feet; all homes shall have a minimum of 1,800 square feet of heated space; all homes shall include stone or brick accents on the front elevation at original construction; all homes shall include vinyl shake or board and batten accents at original construction; all homes shall include a two-car garage; all front yards shall be sodded; and a landscaping berm shall be installed adjacent to Railroad Street. Site notification was posted on March 3, and adjacent property owners were notified by mail on April 6.

Planning and Economic Development Planning and Economic Development Director Penn reviewed the surrounding zoning context, noting a wide variety of districts in the area, including R-6 and R-8 to the south, R-20 to the west, and agricultural residential and light commercial to the north. The site itself is vacant agricultural land, while the dominant surrounding land use is single-family detached residential. He noted that the Winterville Comprehensive Land Use Plan designates this property within the "Urban Neighborhood" character area, which anticipates a density of 3 to 8 dwelling units per acre and supports medium-sized lots with primarily single-family detached residential uses. Staff concluded that the R-6 Conditional District request is consistent with the intent of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, compatible with surrounding land uses and development trends, and consistent with adjacent R-6 and R-8 zoned properties near downtown. Staff recommended approval.

Sam Frank of Ward and Smith presented on behalf of the applicant, accompanied by Ashley Elks, one of the landowners, and Bryan Fagundus, principal of ARC Consulting and civil engineer for the project. Mr. Frank offered two clarifications to the staff report: first, that the 13.5-acre site includes both AR-zoned land (approximately three-quarters of the site) and an existing R-6 zoned portion; and second, that the conceptual site plan has been designed to accommodate 49 lots, each meeting or exceeding the 8,000 square foot minimum. He noted that the nine lots in the existing R-6 portion would effectively be down-zoned to R-6 Conditional, representing a more restrictive designation.

Mr. Frank addressed the five findings of fact required for conditional rezoning. He confirmed that single-family detached residential is permitted use within R-6. He described the community engagement process, noting that the current landowner acquired the property on May 1, 2025, met in person with members of the neighboring Waterford community, and subsequently mailed solicitations to 50 property owners, receiving only one response. He stated that the conditions proposed—including minimum lot size, single-family detachment, minimum home size, construction standards, two-car garage requirement, front yard sodding, and the Railroad Street berm—were developed directly out of that community dialogue and staff engagement.

On the question of traffic impact, Mr. Frank explained that the comparison is made not to the site's current use, but to the most intensive use permissible under its current zoning. He noted that the current zoning would permit, by right, eight R-6 lots (including duplexes) and a 30,000-square-foot public recreation facility on the AR-zoned portion. That combination could generate 923 daily trips and 122 peak-hour trips. By contrast, the proposed 49-lot single-family development is projected to generate 523 daily trips and 51 peak-hour trips; a meaningful reduction in intensity.

With respect to buffering and impacts on the adjacent Waterford subdivision to the west, Mr. Frank described a layered approach: an existing 20-foot drainage easement on the Waterford side, a new 20-foot drainage easement on the western boundary of the Vernon Crossing site, and a 20-foot vegetated

buffer inboard of that easement—creating a combined minimum separation of 60 feet between structures in the two communities, with vegetative screening. He also noted the landscaping berm required along Railroad Street as an additional buffer on the eastern edge of the site. Mr. Frank acknowledged that a cap of 49 lots and the 20-foot vegetated buffer along the western boundary are not currently enumerated as formal conditions but stated that the applicant is fully prepared to accept either or both as conditions of approval.

Alternate Member Domini Cunningham asked whether the vegetated buffer between Vernon Crossing and the Waterford neighborhood a regulatory requirement or a voluntary commitment was. Planning and Economic Development Director Penn confirmed that a vegetative buffer between two single-family residential districts would not be required by the Town, making it a voluntary concession by the applicant. Mr. Frank offered to address this either through an additional written condition or by incorporating the conceptual site plan by reference.

ETJ Member Henry Hostetler asked for clarification on the open space plan. Engineer Bryan Fagundus explained that open space would be provided near mailbox areas, around the stormwater pond (which the applicant intends to provide amenities), and along the buffer and easement areas at the rear of the site. He noted that active recreational amenities such as courts or playgrounds are not practical for developments of this size, as maintenance costs tend to become a burden on small HOA's, and that the preferred approach is to contribute to town-wide park and recreation facilities.

Mr. Hostetler and the Chair also questioned access points and traffic distribution. Mr. Fagundus confirmed that the development would have two points of ingress and egress—one on Worthington Street and one on Railroad Street Extension—and that traffic would be split between the two, with residents likely using Worthington Street to access Highway 11 and Railroad Street Extension for eastbound travel on Vernon White Road.

On the question of housing affordability, Member James Jones and Member Darlene Gardner inquired about anticipated home prices. Mr. Frank indicated that homes on smaller lots are organically more affordable and that his client anticipates starting prices in the range of \$375,000 to \$400,000.

Public Comment: Five members of the public, all residents of the adjacent Waterford subdivision (Foxcroft Lane and Waterford Drive), spoke in opposition to the rezoning request.

Michael Moore (237 Foxcroft Lane) referenced the Comprehensive Land Use Plan directly, citing survey results showing strong resident support for large-lot single-family housing, and the plan's guidance that rezoning requests may be denied even when the future land use map supports them, if they are premature or do not fit well with surrounding uses. He highlighted the density disparity—Waterford is zoned R-20 (20,000 square foot minimum lots) while the proposal requests R-6 with 8,000 square foot lots—and noted a comparable transition point in town between the Baywood (R-20) and Cornerstone (R-6) subdivisions. He also raised concerns about flooding in the area, noting that the Vernon White and Railroad Street corridor is not included in the town's current ten-year stormwater capital improvement plan.

Bill King (201 Foxcroft Lane) stated that he does not oppose development of the property but does not believe the proposal has meaningfully changed from the 2023 submission. He noted that while the lot size increased from 7,000 to 8,000 square feet, the lot width remains the same, meaning three homes would back up to each of their neighbors' yards. He called for a more gradual zoning transition rather than a direct jump from R-20 to R-6, drawing on his professional background in land development in the Raleigh-Wake County market.

Bill Chapman (209 Foxcroft Lane) echoed concerns about the lack of substantive change from the prior proposal and questioned the traffic comparison methodology used by the applicant's team,

characterizing the recreational facility scenario as an unrealistic baseline. He described existing flooding conditions in the neighborhood and expressed concern that replacing the adjacent agricultural field—which he described as a natural buffer and absorption area—with impervious surfaces and homes would exacerbate flooding. He also disputed the claim that the development will cap at 49 lots, noting the engineer's own qualification that the layout "assumes" that configuration going forward.

Jeff Foster (175 Foxcroft Lane) emphasized that the differences between the current proposal and the 2023 submission are minimal. He noted that while residents do not oppose development of the property, they are seeking a development compatible with Waterford's character, referencing the Cornerstone subdivision (which adjoins Baywood) as a model, where large homes on small lots were built entirely of brick. He expressed concern about the absence of firm assurances regarding final layout and construction standards.

Pamela Fox (2266 Waterford Drive) challenged the applicant's characterization of the site as "walkable" to downtown Winterville, noting that the elementary school is approximately one mile away and downtown is even further, with no continuous sidewalk infrastructure in the intervening area.

Johnny Fleming (185 Foxcroft Lane) also disputed the walkability claims, noting the absence of sidewalks along the corridor. He raised concerns about noise and visual impacts from having multiple homes backing up to his single backyard, and reiterated flooding concerns regarding stormwater runoff onto neighboring properties.

Mr. Frank closed and responded to the public's comments. He reiterated that Vernon Crossing is not intended to be an extension of Waterford and that the proposed buffering measures—voluntarily offered between two residential communities—are far beyond what is typically provided in such circumstances. He emphasized that at 3.6 units per acre, the project sits at the extremely low end of the density range contemplated by the Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Urban Neighborhood character area. On stormwater, he argued that development of the property under state-mandated stormwater requirements will result in a more controlled and deliberate discharge of water than currently exists on the vacant farmland, which has no stormwater management at all. He also noted that there is no legal easement or entitlement permitting neighboring properties to use the subject site as a drainage buffer. He confirmed the applicant's willingness to add a condition capping the number of lots at 49. He closed by noting that good planning policy encourages a diversity of housing types and that the Comprehensive Land Use Plan reflects this principle.

Planning and Economic Development Director Penn added that the new development would be required to manage its own stormwater per state standards, which could theoretically provide some incidental benefit to the Waterford neighborhood, though the Town's site review would be limited to ensuring the new development meets state requirements for its own land. He referred to broader stormwater questions about the Waterford area to the Town's assistant manager and public works department, who are conducting ongoing stormwater studies.

Board Deliberation and Vote

The Chair reminded the Board that the matter before them was solely a recommendation to Town Council on the rezoning request, and that no plat or site renderings were before the Board for consideration.

Motion by Member Jones and second by Vice Chair Kilian to approve the rezoning request is recommended to Town Council for Vernon Crossing. Motion carried, 8-1. Member Hostetler opposed.

2. Copper Creek Section 3 Final Plat.

Planning and Economic Development Director Penn presented the Copper Creek Section 3 Final Plat. The development is located off Reedy Branch Road, just north of Copper Creek Section 1, and is proposed by Terri Ventures Group. Section 3 features 34 lots across 12.8 acres within a R-12.5 zoning district and includes a stub for future northward growth. Staff confirmed that the final plat matches the approved preliminary plat and has received Technical Review Committee (TRC) approval. Staff recommended approval.

Motion by Member Gardner and second by Member Luton to accept the final plat for Copper Creek Section 3. Motion carried unanimously, 9-0.

REPORTS FROM STAFF:

Planning and Economic Development Director Penn provided a brief update on residential development activity in Winterville. He noted significant growth in Southbrook development, particularly along the Church Street side. Quail Trace, off Reedy Branch Road, has active grading underway. He noted that with Copper Creek Section 3 nearing completion, there is a substantial volume of residential development in the pipeline. He thanked the Board for their service and wished members a pleasant April.

COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS:

The Chair announced that he would be participating in UNC School of Government training in New Bern on May 12.

ETJ Member Hostetler referenced a letter that had been received and directed at staff regarding the pace of development in Winterville, in which the author implied that the Board may not care about community concerns. Member Hostetler took exception to that characterization, noting that all Board members are uncompensated volunteers, are residents of the jurisdiction, and attend regular training, and that both the Board and staff are genuinely committed to the interests of the community.

A discussion followed regarding Board procedures, specifically the appropriate timing for board member deliberation relative to motions and votes. Member Hostetler expressed some uncertainty about when board members should raise substantive comments during a rezoning review, particularly after the consistency and reasonableness review phase. The Chair and Member Gardner clarified that the period prior to calling for a formal motion is the appropriate time for board member comments and deliberation on consistency and reasonableness, and that the Board will continue to allow that opportunity to go forward.

Member Brandy Daniels raised a procedural observation she had also noted at a recent town hall: the applicant's presentation had consumed approximately 32 to 33 minutes, while public comment from six residents totaled approximately 18 to 20 minutes. She suggested that the Board consider establishing time limits for applicant presentations, similar to the three-minute limit applied to public speakers, to ensure more balanced use of meeting times. The Chair asked Planning and Economic Development Director Penn to research applicable norms and whether such limits could be implemented.

Member Jones offered closing remarks in support of the Vernon Crossing rezoning, noting that the site is historically situated in an R-6 context and that Winterville has a need for more organically affordable housing options. He also observed that the concern about an R-20 neighborhood adjacent to an R-6 development could be viewed inversely; Waterford (R-20) was itself built into an R-6 context.

Member Hostetler, speaking from personal experience as a Baywood resident, shared that stormwater issues in Baywood had worsened following the construction of the adjacent Cornerstone subdivision, and expressed ongoing concern about the downstream impacts of new development on neighboring communities. He acknowledged, however, that current development standards are more rigorous than those in effect when older subdivisions were built.

Member Hostetler also noted that Planning and Economic Development Director Penn's report referenced approximately 493 new homes anticipated to become available in Winterville in the near future.

ADJOURN:

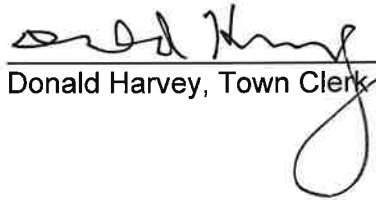
Motion by Member Jones and second by Member Gardner to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously, 9-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:32 pm.

Adopted the 17th day of August 2026.



ATTEST:


Gregory Monroe, Chairman


Donald Harvey, Town Clerk