



Planning, Development & Inspections

A Division of Community Services
P.O. Box 550 • Raleigh, NC 27602
www.wake.gov

MINUTES OF REGULAR PLANNING BOARD - September 3, 2025

LOCATION: Wake County Justice Center, 301 S. Salisbury St., Room 2700, Raleigh, NC

MEMBERS PRESENT:

1. Ms. Brenna Booker-Williams (Chair)
2. Mr. Ted Van Dyk (Vice Chair)
3. Mr. David Adams
4. Mr. Amos Clark
5. Mr. Asa Fleming
6. Mr. Bill Jenkins
7. Ms. Suzanne Prince
8. Mr. Thomas Wells

MEMBERS ABSENT:

1. Dr. Kamal Kolappa
2. Ms. Sally Rice

COUNTY STAFF:

1. Ms. Leila Coe
2. Mr. Steven Finn
3. Mr. Timothy Maloney
4. Mr. Josh McClellan
5. Ms. Betsy Pearce

COUNTY ATTORNEY:

- Mr. Kenneth Murphy, Deputy County Attorney

-
1. **Meeting Called to Order:** Ms. Booker-Williams called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.
 2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
 3. **Petitions and Amendments:** Mr. Maloney requested that the Eastern Wake Area Plan be removed from the agenda, pending discussions with the Town of Wendell. Mr. Adams made a motion to remove the agenda item, with a second from Ms. Prince. The Eastern Wake Area Plan was unanimously removed from the September 2025 agenda.
 4. **Approval of June 4, 2025, Minutes:** Mr. Jenkins made a motion to approve the April 2, 2025, minutes with corrections. Mr. Wells seconded the motion, and the Board adopted it unanimously.

5. Raleigh-Durham International Airport Update – Delia Chi, RDU VP of Planning and Sustainability

Ms. Chi, Vice President of Planning and Sustainability for Raleigh-Durham International Airport, began her presentation by explaining that the Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority (RDUAA) is a governmental entity that acts like a business, and is responsible for the development, operations, and maintenance of the RDU International Airport. The RDUAA is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of 8 members divided equally between the counties of Wake and Durham, and the cities of Durham and Raleigh (the Authorities owning stakeholders). There are approximately 600 employees supporting the board, the majority of which are full-time.

According to the North Carolina Department of Transportation State of Aviation Report, RDU was responsible for \$24 Billion in annual economic output, supporting 140,000 jobs, and accounting for \$9.8 billion in personal income and \$1.3 billion in State and Local taxes. The airport's growth has continued to improve, post-pandemic, to 15.5 million passengers in 2024. Partner airlines have increased to nineteen, with eighty-one nonstop destinations (including fourteen international). Ms. Chi noted that based on current projections, the Research Triangle Region is anticipated to reach 2.7 million residents, with a broader catchment area of 4.4 million using RDU.

Ms. Chi explained that RDU's major capital project, Vision 2040, is divided into four components over the next ten years: a new runway project, Terminal Two's Landside expansion, the John Brantley Boulevard extension, and the Park Economy 3 expansion. The total cost is expected to be \$2.5 billion dollars, and Phase One of Vision 2040 will not include adding gate capacity. The new runway (5L/23R) is a relocation of the longest runway 537 feet northwest, along with a conversion of the existing runway into a parallel taxiway, with expected completion in 2029. Ms. Chi presented a video of the "20 Hour Closures" process in timelapse, which extend the useful life of the runways until the new one is completed. If everything is completed according to schedule, RDU hopes to begin adding gates in 2031.

The Terminal Two Landside Expansion will increase the size of the ticketing area, security checkpoints, and international arrivals area, as well as add a new baggage handling system by 2031. Expansion will allow Terminal Two to increase the capacity for passengers from 400 to 1,000 per hour. Ms. Chi provided the Board with a video showing a simulated walkthrough of the completed expansion. The most visible construction will come from the John Brantley Boulevard Extension project, designed to alleviate congestion between Terminal One and Terminal Two. Ms. Chi also explained it would resolve safety issues with visitors accessing International Boulevard. The primary component is the development of "Bridge B," which will allow better division between the two terminals, as well as shift departures to the Ground Transportation Center upon completion. The Ground Transportation Center will use one of the existing parking garage floors to allow passengers to access from either terminal, connected via a tunnel. The "Bridge A" project will separate traffic and extend the curb length for arriving passengers.

Ms. Chi explained that the Park Economy 3 Expansion will be near the Sheetz and National Guard Road. The existing lot is designed for long-term, economy parking, with a current capacity of 4,000 spaces. The Expansion will increase the size of the lot to 11,000 spaces and will install a Customer Amenity building to address security concerns. The amenities building will also house RDU's ground transportation, parking, and partial law enforcement departments. For customers, the center will include dining areas, restrooms, and heat / air conditioning. Ms. Chi also noted that RDU had received platinum verification for InVision, a flatwork projects sustainability framework. Their stormwater control measures include submerged gravel wetland, designed in conjunction with NC State and other agencies, to better filter out pollutants within the stormwater control area. Along with the Park

Economy 3 Expansion, RDU is proposing a new service road to help shuttle passengers from the lot to the terminals.

Mr. Jenkins asked if the expanded lot was all surface, and Ms. Chi confirmed that was correct – there were no plans for structured parking. Mr. Van Dyk asked about tree canopy mitigation relative to the parking expansion, and Ms. Chi responded that it was not possible for the demands of the lot, but that they had been able to reduce the canopy loss during runway project construction.

Mr. Clark asked if RDU had plans for Terminal One, and Mr. Bill Sandifer, Executive Vice President and Chief Development Officer, approached the lectern and explained that Terminal One was built in the early 1980s, originally as a hangar. It presented some unique challenges for expansion, but he and Ms. Chi had been working on a program definition for Vision 2040. The current plans include increasing Terminal One from 180,000 square feet to close to 750,000 square feet, expanding from 9 gates to 23. It also includes the possibility of an international arrival facility, contingent on staffing and support from the Federal Government. If the plans are viable, the RDUAA would begin construction no earlier than 2028. Mr. Sandifer also added that the decision not to replant trees in the Park Economy 3 Expansion was related to security issues – the Authority felt that the ability to monitor the lot for safety concerns would be hampered by decreased vision. Converting the lot to a structure would be cost prohibitive.

Ms. Chi resumed her presentation, highlighting the RDUAA's outreach to local government agencies, both the municipalities and Wake County. She explained that it helped RDU develop their sustainability goals and compare their capital improvement projects with neighboring agencies. It shines a light on potential areas of alignment and development opportunities. FAA grant assurances require the Airport Authority to ensure compatibility between the airport and development in the region surrounding the airport. RDUAA also meets with developers to discuss their zoning height ordinance, which ensures buildings are not built in a way that obstructs air navigation. This also applies to crane heights, which can impact flights arriving and departing. Other points of discussion include noise contour disclosures for subdivision developers – Ms. Chi noted that RDU has seen an increase in noise complaints since the pandemic.

Mr. Wells asked what relationship the Airport Authority had with the proposed Mass Transit Center over I-40, and Ms. Chi responded that the Regional Transportation Alliance has been working on the project, and RDUAA supports it. The site is in the preliminary stages, with a location currently being discussed. Mr. Wells asked if the RDUAA had considered planting trees to offset the loss of tree canopy in the Park Economy 3 Expansion, and Mr. Sandifer responded that they have not made any decisions regarding the preservation of existing forest space. They do have a forestry management plan, and during the design process of the runway project, they realized that an original 480-acre tree removal plan was unnecessary.

Mr. Fleming asked if there were any additional developments to the airport infrastructure, relative to general aviation, and Mr. Sandifer noted that there is interest in a general aviation hangar to the northeast of the airport, that would need to be financed entirely by private funds. Ms. Booker-Williams asked how the airport deals with noise complaints, and Ms. Chi explained that they are received either by phone or through RDU's website. Mr. Sandifer added that the goal with noise complaints is to help educate the public and to explain their CASPER system, which is a noise monitoring system that provides data analysis about flight zones and affected areas. Mr. Adams asked for clarification regarding air traffic controllers, and Mr. Sandifer explained that they are fully staffed by the Federal Government.

6. Proposed Ordinance Amendment OA-04-25 – Timothy Maloney, Director, Wake County Planning Development & Inspections

Mr. Maloney explained that this item is an ordinance amendment covered at last month's Committee meeting. The purpose of the amendment is to 1) extend the validity of Preliminary Subdivision Plans and Special Use Permits, 2) amend the definition of Building and Structure to help differentiate between the two, and 3) amend various standards for care homes (Family Care Homes, Group Homes), and add a new use for residential Youth Care Home that aligns with current trends and community needs.

The Wake County UDO requires certain permits to be completed within a specified time frame to avoid changes in standards and requirements. Preliminary Subdivision Plans are currently valid for two years with a one-time option for one-year extension (3-years total). During this period, the developer constructs the subdivision roads, stormwater devices and community utilities (water and sewer). Mr. Maloney noted that staff is seeing more situations where developers are not able to meet these time limitations, and they are proposing extending the validity from 2 years to 3 years and retain the option for a one-year extension, increasing the total time frame to 4 years.

Mr. Maloney explained that a Special Use Permit is required for certain types of developments or facilities that may have specific impacts on the community, like a childcare center or church in a residential zone. Special Use Permits require a public hearing and approval from the Board of Adjustment. They are currently valid for two years with an option for a six-month extension (2.5-years total). During this period, the applicant must obtain necessary building permits and / or proceed with due diligence and good faith to start the authorized use or development. Similar to Preliminary Subdivision Plans, staff indicate some developers are having difficulty meeting these limitations. Accordingly, staff propose extending the validity from 2 years to 3 years, and increase the option for a one-time extension from six months to one year, increasing the total time frame to 4 years.

The UDO provides a definition for both "Building" and "Structure". However, the two definitions need minor amendments regarding open air buildings and structures. A Building is defined as "any structure having a roof supported by columns or walls and intended for shelter, housing, or enclosure of any individual, animal, process, equipment, goods, or materials of any kind." A Structure is defined as "any object anchored to the ground, constructed or installed by humankind including signs, buildings, parking lots, garages, carports, flagpoles, stoops and utility buildings. All buildings are structures, but not all structures are buildings." Current definitions lack clarity on what "enclosure" means.

Staff proposes an amendment to the definitions clarifying that the definitions read as follows:

- Building: "any structure having a roof supported by columns or walls, **where more than 50% of the building is enclosed** and intended for the shelter, housing, or enclosure of any individual, animal, process, equipment, goods, or materials of any kind."
- Structure: "Any object anchored to the ground, **where 50% or less of the structure is enclosed, and** constructed or installed by humankind, including, **but not limited to:** signs, parking lots, garages, carports, flagpoles, **patios, and** stoops. All buildings are structures, but not all structures are buildings."

The new definition of structure would remove references to buildings. This would remove ambiguities surrounding carports and lean-to's, and would align better with the North Carolina Building Code's definitions.

Staff is recommending the revision of the Family Care Homes definitions and standards to remove the requirement that operators provide documentation on the closest licensed family care home and its proximity to the proposed family care home. The requirement no longer needs to be codified since staff conduct this search during submittal. Mr. Maloney explained the proposed change to Group Homes: removing the requirement that Group Homes must have a minimum land area equal to or greater than that required under the applicable zoning district. This will allow Group Homes to locate in Open Space Subdivisions that have smaller lots than the designated zoning district.

Staff also propose a new land use, Section 4-66 Youth Care Home. The new use will address current trends and community needs for youth care facilities that the current care homes do not. The proposed definition of Youth Care Homes shall be as follows: "Youth Care Homes means a public or private healthy facility, establishment, or institution, however styled, where nonrelated individuals under the age of 18 reside to receive care under adult supervision."

Youth Care Facilities with 1-6 youths will be permitted by right in all residential districts. Seven or more youths will require a Special Use Permit in residential districts. Youth Care Homes may not be located within a one-half mile radius of an existing care home. Staff has met with the Homebuilders Association for feedback, along with Wake County's Behavioral Health Department, and both support the proposed land use category.

Staff Findings are that the proposed amendment 1) introduces more flexibility to the preliminary subdivision and special use permit processes, 2) provides clarification between what is a building and what is a structure, 3) introduces a new use for youth care homes that aligns with recent trends and community needs, 4) removes unnecessary requirements for Group Homes and Family Care Homes, and that 5) the amendments are consistent with the Wake County Comprehensive Plan and the Wake County Unified Development Ordinance. Staff recommends that the Wake County Planning Board 1) recommend that the Board of Commissioners adopt the statement of consistency for Ordinance Amendment 04-25 as presented, and by separate motion, 2) recommend that that Board of Commissioners adopt Ordinance Amendment 04-25 as presented.

Mr. Jenkins asked why Youth Care Homes may not be located within a one-half mile radius of an existing care home, and Mr. Maloney explained it was from an older study that aligned with types of uses in other jurisdictions. Ms. Coe and Mr. Finn confirmed that this regulation mirrors State Statute.

Public Hearing

Ms. Booker-Williams opened the floor for public comment and hearing none, closed the floor at 2:47 p.m.

Board Motion for Consistency OA-04-25

Mr. Van Dyk made the motion that, in the matter of OA-04-25, the Planning Board adopt and offer to the Board of Commissioners the following recommended statements finding that the proposed text amendment is consistent with the Wake County Comprehensive Plan and the Wake County UDO, as seen in Article 1-22, is to provide guide for the physical development of the county, preserve and enhance the overall quality of life for residents, and establish clear and efficient development review procedures. The text amendment included herein accomplishes this as described in the following statements.

1. Removes development requirements for care homes that are no longer relevant.
2. Provides more time and flexibility to developers / builders as it relates to the subdivision process and Special Use Permits.

3. Incorporates a new use that addresses a trend and community need for youth care facilities.
4. It is consistent with the intent and purpose of the Wake County Unified Development Ordinance.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Prince and was approved unanimously.

Board Motion for Approval on OA-04-25

Mr. Jenkins made a motion that, in the matter of OA-04-25, the Board finds that the adoption of this proposed text amendment is consistent with the Wake County Comprehensive Plan and Wake County Unified Development Ordinance and is reasonable and in the public interest and hereby make a motion to recommend approval of this proposed text amendment to the Wake County Board of Commissioners.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Clark and was approved unanimously.

7. Proposed Ordinance Amendment OA-05-25 – Betsy Pearce, Assistance Program Manager, Post Construction Stormwater

Ms. Pearce explained that this amendment proposed to clarify County authority, align regulations with State law, provide consistent definition of a common measurement, and to clarify where stormwater ponds may be installed.

Staff are requesting that five minor changes be considered:

- 1) Section 11 Part 2 Water Supply Watershed Buffers – *amended to consistently define a stream buffer width as measuring from the top of the stream bank and a pond buffer width as measuring from edge of the normal water level.*

Ms. Pearce explained that buffers are currently measured from the centerline of the stream, but State mandated riparian buffers and water supply buffers are measured at the drainageway starting at the top of the bank for a stream or at the normal water level of the pond, lake or reservoir. Ms. Pearce explained that the proposed amendment would make the definition consistent with State rule 15A NCAC 02B.0714 8(a).

- 2) Section 11-10 Applicability of Neuse Riparian Buffer Protection Rules – *to add text stating the County administers the Jordan Lake Buffer Rules.*

Ms. Pearce explained that the County administers Jordan Lake Buffer rules in addition to the Neuse River Buffer Rules, and the amendment of the definition of buffer should be changed to be consistent throughout the UDO and with State definition. The added text would clarify that the County administers the program by reference to State Rule 15A NCAC 02B.0267 15(b).

- 3) Section 10-30-2(B)(2)(b) Financial Responsibility and Ownership – *changes the residency requirement from a resident of Wake County to a resident of North Carolina.*

The purpose of 10-30-2(B)(2)(b) is to ensure that there is a financially responsible party on record to receive notices of compliance or non-compliance with the erosion and sedimentation control plan. Ms. Pearce noted that currently, the party or designated agent must be a Wake County resident, which is at times burdensome for non-local parties. The amendment expands the residency requirement from the County to the State of North Carolina. The change is in

response to a 2024 State Audit of the county Erosion Control Program that identified the need to make the language consistent with State regulations.

- 4) Section 10-42-3(B) Notice of Civil Penalty Assessment – *corrects the time to request remission of the penalty from 60 days to 30 days.*
- 5) Section 10-42-4(B) Appeal of Civil Penalties - *corrects the time to request remission of the penalty from 60 days to 30 days.*

Ms. Pearce explained that the changes to 10-42-3(B) and 10-42-4(B) adjust the deadlines from 60 days to 30 days to be consistent with State regulations. Staff reached out the Homebuilders Association of Raleigh-Wake County and addressed their questions regarding the proposed amendments.

Staff find that the amendments will have no impact on development rights, that they provide clear, consistent definitions of common terms, are consistent with State Statute, and are consistent with the intent and purpose of the Wake County Unified Development Ordinance.

Staff recommend that the Wake County Planning Board 1) recommend that the Board of Commissioners adopt the statement of consistency for Ordinance Amendment 05-25 as presented, and by separate motion, 2) recommend that the Board of Commissioners adopt Ordinance 05-25 as presented.

Mr. Fleming asked what the general feedback from the Homebuilders Association was, and Ms. Pearce clarified that they had been meeting these regulations for years. The buffer regulations are also consistent with Federal regulations regarding water quality.

Public Hearing

Ms. Booker-Williams opened the floor for public comment and, hearing none, closed the floor at 2:56 p.m.

Board Motion for Consistency OA-05-25

Mr. Clark made a motion that, in the matter of OA-05-25, that the Planning Board adopt and offer to the Board of Commissioners the following recommended statements finding that the proposed text amendment is consistent with the Wake County Comprehensive Plan and Wake County Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). The purpose of the Wake County Comprehensive Plan and the Wake County UDO, as seen in Article 1-22, is to provide a guide for the physical development of the county, preserve and enhance the overall quality of life for residents, and establish clear and efficient development review procedures. The text amendment included herein accomplishes this as described in the following statements.

1. No impact on development rights.
2. The amendments provide clear, consistent definition of common terms.
3. The changes are consistent with State Statute.
4. It is consistent with the intent and purpose of the Wake County Unified Development Ordinance.

Ms. Prince seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Board Motion for Approval on OA-05-25

Ms. Prince made a motion that, in the matter of OA-05-25, that the Board finds that the adoption of this proposed text amendment is consistent with the Wake County Comprehensive Plan and Wake County Unified Development Ordinance and is reasonable and in the public interest and hereby make a motion to recommend approval of this proposed text amendment to the Wake County Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Adams seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

8. Little River Update – Timothy Maloney, Director, Wake County Planning Development & Inspections

Mr. Maloney explained that during last month's Committee meetings, more information about the Little River Reservoir was requested in the Eastern Wake Plan update. The Little River Reservoir was first contemplated as a future water supply in the early 1990s, and Wake County began purchasing land for the reservoir shortly after. The County also purchased parkland alongside of the reservoir area, and all land is now in public ownership. The full reservoir pool totals approximately 1,133 acres, with the public land purchased to accommodate a future loop trail and several parks.

Pursuant to an interlocal agreement (ILA) between Wake County, Raleigh, Wake Forest, Wendell, and Zebulon, it was established that the critical (R-40W) and non-critical (R-80W) areas surrounding the reservoir be low density development. The ILA also implements land use regulations that protect water quality, limits commercial uses, prohibits municipal water and sewer extensions into the watershed, prevents municipal annexation, imposes strict impervious surface limitations, all which increases the ability to obtain permits for the future reservoir.

Raleigh continues to identify the reservoir as a viable future water supply for the City and merger towns, but does not anticipate the need for more water supply until 2045-2060. At that point, the reservoir could be the primary option. Pursuant to the ILA, the City's future utility plans do not contemplate any extensions into the watershed. The County concurs with this strategy.

Mr. Maloney provided a slide of the proposed Little River Reservoir, noting that its long and narrow shape differs from the wider Jordan and Falls lake areas. He added that the Sandy Pines preserve is currently open and operated by Wake County, with additional areas being considered for trails, and parks (active or passive). He offered to answer any questions from the Board.

Mr. Van Dyk asked about the land currently being used, and Mr. Maloney noted that the County has agreements with the original owners of the property, and it is currently being leased back to them for farming. He added that the City continues looking for additional solutions and weighs them against the Little River Reservoir as a first option.

9. Committee Reports

Mr. Adams and Mr. Jenkins noted that their respective committee meetings had been covered by today's presentations by Mr. Maloney and Ms. Pearce.

10. Planning, Development, and Inspections Report

Mr. Finn reported that in the last Fiscal Year, staff reported a 9% increase in applications for ministerial review. The gap between zoning and subdivision reviews has continued to grow, with roughly 65% for zoning and 35% subdivision over FY25. Mr. Finn noted that is the most appreciable difference he has seen in a Fiscal Year in his 19 years with the County. Zoning Enforcement is up 24%, all received

from external communication (Wake County remains a passive code enforcement program). Pre-Submittal meetings are up 25%, which Mr. Finn indicated he supported, because 95% of pre-submittals develop and are submitted for approval.

Mr. Finn noted that of the non-residential projects in the submission stage, he sees minor commercial projects like telecommunication tower adjustments. The County's tower ordinance encourages co-location. Additionally, utility stations continue to be a strong driver of non-residential development, extending electricity throughout the County. To that end, Mr. Finn indicated he expected several Special Use Permits to come before the Board of Adjustment over the course of this Fiscal Year. He thanked Mr. Maloney and Ms. Coe for their assistance during the meeting today.

Mr. Maloney informed the Board that there would be an October 1st meeting to discuss the Eastern Wake Area Plan and to receive an update from Affordable Housing. The two ordinance amendments heard today will go before the Board of Commissioners on October 20th, and that he will need either the Chair or Vice Chair to be present.

Mr. Maloney introduced Mr. Tim Gardiner to the Board in his new capacity as the Long-Range Planning Administrator.

Mr. Adams asked if there were any updates on the ETJ expansion moratorium or the Town of Garner, and Mr. Maloney responded that the Town had indicated they would not pursue long-range planning for the time being. The legislation is currently unclear, and they have not received any guidance from the State at present.

11. Chairman's Report

None.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

=====

REGULAR MEETING
WAKE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
September 3, 2025

Chair Brenna Booker-Williams declared the regular meeting
of the Wake County Planning Board for
Wednesday, September 3, 2025, adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Brenna Booker-Williams
Wake County Planning Board

=====