



**OAK RIDGE PLANNING & ZONING BOARD MEETING
AUGUST 28, 2025 - 7:00 P.M.
OAK RIDGE TOWN HALL**

MINUTES

Board Members Present

Jason Streck, Chair
Patti Paslaru, Vice Chair
Patrick Fiorentino
Ron Simpson
Craig Rosenfeld
Clay Flynt, ETJ Representative

Staff Present

Sean Taylor, Planning Director
Sandra Smith, Asst. Town Mgr./Town Clerk

Board Members Absent

Brad Rentz, Alternate
Angie Byrd, Alternate
Christy Leimone, Alternate

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Jason Streck at 7:00 p.m.

2. APPROVE AGENDA

Vice Chair Patti Paslaru made a motion to approve the agenda, and Patrick Fiorentino seconded. The motion was passed unanimously (6-0).

3. APPROVE MINUTES

Clay Flynt made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes from June 26, 2025, and July 24, 2025. Ron Simpson seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. TEXT AMENDMENT: Amendment to Sec. 30-863(b) of the Code of Ordinances regarding the distances for required water and sewer connections.

Chair Jason Streck opened the public hearing and explained that individuals in support of and in opposition to the request had a total of 20 minutes each during which to speak and five minutes each to offer their rebuttals.

Planning Director Sean Taylor explained that consideration was being given to adopting an ordinance modeled after the Town of Stokesdale's, which regulates the required distance for new properties to connect to a water line.

Streck opened the public hearing.

Proponents

None

Opponents

None

Streck closed the public hearing.

Board Discussion

None

Vice Chair Patti Paslaru made a motion to recommend approval of Text Amendment to Sec. 30-863(b), and Craig Rosenfeld seconded. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

B. TEXT AMENDMENT. Amendments to

- 1) Section 30-331 (Permitted Uses) of the Town of Oak Ridge Code of Ordinances to allow Event Centers as a use by right in the GO-M (General Office-Medium Intensity) district, GB (General Business) district, SC (Shopping Center) district, PI (Public and Institutional) district, and as a Special Use Permit in the AG (Agricultural) and RS-40 (Residential) districts
- 2) Section 30-957 (General Requirements) of the Town of Oak Ridge Code of Ordinances to amend *Off Street Parking Requirements* to include Event Center
- 3) Section 30-9 (Definitions) of the Town of Oak Ridge Code of Ordinances to define Event Center
- 4) Chapter 30, Article IX Division 5. Development Standards for Individual Uses to add Event Center and applicable standards

Taylor introduced multiple amendments, which are hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes, pertaining to the addition of Event Center as a use by right in several zoning districts and by Special Use Permit in RS-40 and AG zoning districts.

Streck opened the public hearing.

Proponents

Bill Greco of Land Solutions, P.O. Box 347, spoke in favor and acknowledged that the text amendments had been considered on multiple prior occasions and stated that the proposal was ready for a final recommendation.

Opponents

None

Streck closed the public hearing.

Board Discussion

Paslaru inquired about the definition of a major thoroughfare as referenced in Section 30-140(a) and asked whether only NC 150 and NC 68 met this designation. Taylor responded affirmatively and added that Bunch Road from NC 150 to Brookbank Road was also considered a major thoroughfare.

Patrick Fiorentino cited Section 30-957 and questioned whether the requirement of one parking space per four attendees at an event center was sufficient and typical. Taylor responded that the allotment was consistent with standards in other jurisdictions and added that off-site parking by permit would also be allowed. He further explained that such permits would be issued on a per-event basis, and that on-street parking would be prohibited. Fiorentino asked why additional parking would not be required, and Taylor noted that a smaller 3-acre lot would be challenged to provide adequate parking whereas a 20-acre farm would have sufficient area to accommodate large parking areas. Additionally, Taylor pointed out that the strict limits on parking were designed to limit the number of cars and traffic in residential areas.

Craig Rosenfeld asked whether the size of an event center was restricted. Taylor responded that the current ordinance limited the maximum square footage of any building to 30,000 square feet and noted that additional requirements, such as landscaping and noise regulations, would also need to be considered. He pointed out that few locations within the Town's business district would qualify under these requirements.

Streck agreed with restricting Special Use Permits to properties of at least 3 acres, thereby preventing smaller RS-40 properties from establishing various business ventures. He asked how many parcels along the portions of Bunch and Brookbank Roads, designated as major thoroughfares, would qualify for use as an event center. Taylor responded that very few lots would meet these criteria.

Vice Chair Patti Paslaru made a motion to approve amendments to Sections 30-331, 30-957, 30-9 and Chapter 30, Article IX, Division 5. Patrick Fiorentino seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Subdivision Case # SUB-25-03 River Ridge Farm: 8417 Linville Road is located on the west side of Linville Road, approximately 635 feet northwest of the intersection of Linville Road and Scoggins Road, being in Oak Ridge Township. It is Guilford County Tax Parcel 166242 (approximately 15.5 acres). The proposed subdivision consists of 6 lots, zoned RS-40. The property is owned by Green Horse, LLC.

Taylor presented the Subdivision Case # SUB-25-03 staff report, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes. He stated that staff recommended approval of the subdivision plan. He added that an application to waive the sidewalk requirement had been submitted.

Ron Simpson asked for staff's opinion on the waiver. Taylor highlighted a contradiction in the sidewalk requirement. He noted that the 2006 Land Use Plan map, referenced in the ordinance, placed the tract in the Town Core which requires a sidewalk. However, the 2016 revised Land Use Plan map designated the area as part of the transitional core, which does not mandate sidewalk installation. He further cited the Town's Pedestrian Plan, which called for a pathway rather than a sidewalk extending to Haw River Road. Taylor stated that staff would defer the decision on granting a waiver to the Board.

Paslaru recalled discussions during the installation of the Headwaters Trail parking lot regarding constructing sidewalks intended to make the Mountains-to-Sea Trail accessible from the Town Park. She emphasized that she thought walking Linville Road without sidewalks or designated pathways would be hazardous. She advocated for sidewalks or pathways to promote walkability and safety. Taylor expressed concern with the apparent contradiction in sidewalk requirements but stated that the 2006 Land Use Plan would be the precedent due to its citation in the ordinance. He noted, however, that the existing sidewalks on the opposite side of Linville Road could influence the Board's decision.

Fiorentino reinforced the need for sidewalks and searched for means to install a walkway, which would leave the existing line of trees along the path unharmed. Paslaru referenced a study conducted by an arborist that was included with the sidewalk waiver request, which suggested considering an elevated boardwalk, a permeable paver system, and air excavation (or air spading) as potential options. Simpson explained that a section of the road frontage lacked adequate space to support the installation of a walkway. Clay Flynt asked if an encroachment on right-of-way had been requested from NCDOT to allow a walkway in front of the trees. Taylor said the Board could decline the waiver and require a side path instead.

Streck suggested tabling the discussion of the sidewalk waiver to review the technical details of the subdivision and proposed that the applicant return to a later meeting with viable options for installation of a side path.

In response to a question from Paslaru, Taylor confirmed that lots in the subdivision would be serviced by private well and septic systems.

In response to a question from Fiorentino, Taylor confirmed that Lot 6 had an access easement and that its driveway would connect to Scoggins Road.

Taylor confirmed that a total of five driveways would feed onto Linville Road.

Vice Chair Patti Paslaru made a motion to approve the plat for Subdivision Case # SUB-25-03 and to continue the discussion of the waiver application to the next meeting. Patrick Fiorentino seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

- B. Subdivision Case # SUB-25-04 River Oaks East:** 1850 NC 68N is located on the east side of NC 68N, approximately ½ mile south of the intersection of E. Harrell Road and NC 68N, being in Oak Ridge Township. The parcel is Guilford County Tax

Parcel 163231 (approximately 29.6 acres). This proposed subdivision consists of 24 lots, zoned RS-40. The property is owned by 1850 NC Hwy 68 LLC.

Taylor presented the staff report for Subdivision Case # SUB-25-04, which is hereby incorporated by reference and made a part of the minutes. He noted that the preliminary plat met the technical requirements of the zoning ordinance.

Streck inquired about the undeveloped property east of the proposed subdivision and the potential for a future connection between the two parcels should the eastern parcel be developed. He voiced concern that both subdivisions could end up with multiple unconnected stub roads. He noted for the record his disfavor for approving stub roads without any potential for connection. Taylor indicated that the proposed subdivision's plat depicted NCDOT approved turnarounds rather than traditional stub roads, and he stated that any connection between the two parcels would rely on future development plans. He added that no geographical issues existed to encumber any future connection.

Paslaru asked about well and septic systems for the subdivision, and Taylor indicated that lots would be serviced by individual well and septic systems and that only a few small common areas were drawn into the plan.

Simpson inquired about the tree preservation requirements for the subdivision, and Taylor stated that the plan satisfied the minimum technical requirement of preserving 20 percent of all trees within the subdivision.

Streck inquired into the setback from the east and north of the subdivision. Bill Greco, PO Box 347, stated that the setback was 30 feet and that the total percentage of trees which would be preserved was slightly higher than the minimum requirement.

Fiorentino asked about what was on the south side of the subdivision. Taylor replied that an existing development lay to the south and that existing homes this tract. He indicated that no plans had been established to connect the two developments. Fiorentino inquired about the cul-de-sacs on the south side, and Taylor stated that the cul-de-sacs were NCDOT-sanctioned temporary cul-de-sacs. Streck added that the turnarounds were made to look and function as cul-de-sacs without technically qualifying as a cul-de-sac. Greco explained that revised NCDOT standards for permanent turnarounds required a radius of 48 feet or 96 feet total diameter, and that the radius of the temporary turnaround was 30 feet or 60 feet total diameter. He confirmed that the turnarounds indicated in the plan met NCDOT standards.

Streck observed that the temporary turnarounds slightly encroached upon adjoining property lines and asked if the land would revert to the respective properties once the turnarounds were converted into stub roads. Greco explained that the final plat was required to document the temporary status of the turnaround and its easement. He further noted that reversion of the easement to the appropriate property would rest with the developer.

Patrick Fiorentino made a motion to approve Subdivision Case SUB-25-04 River Oaks East, and Craig Rosenfeld seconded. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

C. Staff presentation of proposed text amendment

Assistant Town Manager/Town Clerk Sandra Smith advised the removal of the agenda item.

Ron Simpson made a motion to remove item 5C under New Business from the agenda, and Vice Chair Patti Paslaru seconded. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jacob Letterman, 309 Heather Ridge Court in Greensboro, representing the owner of the property on Linville Road, offered some comments for the Board's consideration regarding the application to waive the sidewalk requirement. He stated that the subdivision resided in the 45 mph speed limit zone and that his objective was to preserve trees as well as the aesthetic presentation of the property. He indicated that due to the elevations of the drainage ditch mandated by NCDOT, any pathway built would disrupt the root system of the trees. He further observed that the plat had been prepared in accordance with the 2016 revised Land Use Plan rather than the 2006 Land Use Map, underscoring the contradictory nature of the requirements. Expressing concerns for safety, Letterman stated that sidewalks on this property would not connect to anything. He suggested that continued preservation of the property's aesthetics would present a challenge in meeting the requirement for sidewalks with a minimum width of 48 inches.

Adrian Eckenrod, 5679 Timber Trace Way, introduced himself as a candidate for Town Council.

Paslaru addressed concerns regarding the placement of a sidewalk on Linville Road. She explained that the Town could obtain easements from other properties on Linville Road. She stated that once easements were obtained, the Town could fund the installation of a pathway to improve accessibility to the Headwaters Trail. She expressed confidence that the goal was obtainable while preserving the aesthetics of the area.

Simpson added that the study of the Linville Road property by the applicant's arborist bore three viable options for a pathway that he felt were worthy of consideration.

Streck suggested placing the discussion of the sidewalk's viability on the following month's agenda for a closer investigation by the Board. He noted that this would allow the applicant additional time to develop options.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Patti Paslaru made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m., and Patrick Fiorentino seconded. The motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Respectfully Submitted:

Sandra B. Smith, MMC, NCCMC
Assistant Town Manager / Town Clerk

Jason Streck
Chair