

Town of Unionville

April 2026 Planning Board

Meeting minutes

The Planning Board of the Town of Unionville met on Monday, April 6, 2026, at Town Hall, 1102 Unionville Church Road, Monroe, NC. Board members JR Hayes, Devin Clontz, Steve Outen, Will Crook and Alternates Whitney Wall and Mark Arrowood were present. Absent were Jerry Adams, Annette Harris and Doug Helms.

Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Invocation

An invocation was offered.

Welcome and Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.

Approval of Minutes of March 2, 2026, Meeting

Motion: Steve Outen moved to approve the minutes. Devin Clontz seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Consideration of Recommendation for ZC-26-01

A Rezoning Request for 6.46 Acres on Concord Highway from RA-40 to B-2 Zoning

Land Use Administrator Melody Braswell presented a staff report on the rezoning request for parcel 09174102, located at 2919 Concord Highway. The 6.46-acre parcel abuts the Martin Ridge subdivision and had not been developed for residential use due to site constraints. The applicant sought a conventional rezoning from RA-40 to B-2 general commercial zoning.

Braswell noted that neighboring properties to the south are already zoned B-2, and that the Town's adopted Comprehensive Land Use Plan designates this location within the US Highway 601 and Ridge Road commercial node as a strategic area for future commercial development. Staff recommended approval. The Board briefly discussed the nature of a conventional rezoning, noting that no specific use could be required of the applicant, though all development must comply with the B-2 use table. Access to the parcel would be via a separate entrance on Concord Highway, not through the Martin Ridge subdivision entrance.

Vice Chairman Devin Clontz raised a concern regarding a prior community survey in which fewer than one percent of respondents expressed a desire for commercial development. Braswell clarified that the Board's role at this stage is to evaluate the request for consistency with the land use plan and ordinance, not to conduct a public hearing; that process would occur at the Town Council level. Braswell confirmed that if approved by the Planning Board, the matter would be forwarded to Town Council, which would set a public hearing anticipated for its May 18, 2026 regular meeting.

Motion to recommend approval of zoning map amendment to change the zoning of parcel 09174102, with a physical street address of 2919 Concord Highway, from RA-40 to B-2, based on the request's compliance with the Town of Unionville Comprehensive Plan adopted June 2022 — specifically, that the area is within the designated commercial land use category, consistent with the plan's goals to prevent strip development and focus new commercial development at strategic nodes, and that the request represents a logical extension of existing higher-intensity nonresidential development in the area — was made by Alternate Member Mark Arrowood, and seconded by Steve Outen. While one member did not vote, the motion carried unanimously, per Article III, Part 1, Section 23(C) of the Land Use Ordinance.

Review of Recommended Articles 4 and 5 of Unified Development Ordinance – Michael Harvey via Microsoft Teams

Back-up Land Use Administrator Michael Harvey participated remotely to introduce the Board to the revised draft Articles 4 (Zoning Districts) and 5 (Land Use Standards) of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO). The session was informational; no decisions were required of the Board.

Harvey's presentation focused on the following key points:

Consolidation and Formatting. The revised ordinance consolidates dimensional standards, definitions, and regulatory components currently spread across multiple sections into a single, centralized article, improving usability for both staff and the public.

Residential Districts. Harvey recommended collapsing redundant residential district pairs (RA-40/R-40; RA-2/R-2; R-15/R-10) into unified districts — rebranded as RA-1, RA-2, and RA-3 — with the primary distinction between them being the allowance of manufactured homes. The R-6 district, for which there are no currently zoned parcels in Unionville, was proposed for potential elimination. Harvey recommended eliminating the R-6 district entirely, as it was not deemed necessary for the community.

Manufactured Home Parks (R-8). Harvey proposed converting the R-8 manufactured home park district into a conditional zoning district, requiring applicants to submit a full site plan and undergo a public hearing process. This approach would provide greater community engagement and oversight. The Board expressed general support for this direction.

Comprehensive Plan Update. Harvey cautioned that without a distinction in the future land use map between rural, suburban, and urbanizing areas, higher-density residential districts can be applied anywhere in the community. He strongly recommended that the Town update its Comprehensive Plan and future land use map to provide clearer guidance. He and Braswell noted they would be presenting to Town Council at its April meeting to seek direction before returning to the Planning Board.

Sewer Infrastructure. The Board acknowledged that higher-density districts requiring public water and sewer are effectively constrained by the Town's current absence of any municipally-owned sewer infrastructure, with buildout of such systems estimated to be at least ten years away.

Commercial Districts. Harvey recommended renaming and consolidating several commercial districts for clarity, including rebranding B-1 as a Main Street District, the community business district as a Neighborhood Commercial District, and collapsing B-3 and the Office District into a new Employment, Office, and Institutional District. The B-4 and general commercial designations were similarly consolidated. The light industrial district was proposed to be rebranded simply as an Industrial District, with heavy industrial uses potentially handled via a separate overlay district requiring a conditional rezoning.

Down-Zoning Limitations. Harvey advised the Board that under current North Carolina state law, the Town cannot remove or restrict existing permitted uses from districts that are already in use without the consent of all affected property owners, limiting its ability to modernize some existing land use allowances in the near term.

Table of Permitted Uses. A revised, reformatted table of permitted uses was introduced, providing expanded and more precise land use definitions — including uses such as data centers — to prevent ambiguity and unintended permitting outcomes. Harvey noted that the table remains incomplete pending direction from staff and the Board on district structure, and will be finalized once that feedback is received.

Harvey asked the Board to review the draft documents over the next 30 days and provide feedback to staff. He confirmed he would attend the May meeting in person to present proposed comprehensive plan map revisions and solicit further direction from the Board.

Other Business

No other business was brought before the Board.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Sonya W. Gaddy
Deputy Clerk

Note: These minutes were drafted with the assistance of Clerk Minutes by HeyGov. All content was reviewed and approved by the Deputy Clerk prior to submission.