

August 3, 2026 Planning Board Meeting

Meeting Minutes

August 3, 2026, 7:30 PM

1102 Unionville Church Road, Unionville, NC, US

Opening Proceedings

The Planning Board of the Town of Unionville convened its regular meeting on Monday, August 3, 2026, at 7:30 PM at Unionville Town Hall, 1102 Unionville Church Road, Unionville, NC. Planning Board chairman JR Hayes, and members Jerry Adams, Devin Clontz, Will Crook, Annette Harris, Doug Helms and Whitney Wall and alternate Mark Arrowood were present. Back-up LUA Michael Harvey was also present. Absent were LUA Melody Braswell and alternate John Hinson. The meeting was called to order following the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag and an invocation, led by Devin Clontz..

Action Items

1. Consideration of Minutes — July 6, 2026 Planning Board Meeting Minutes

The Chair invited the Board to consider the minutes from the July 6, 2026 Planning Board Meeting. With no corrections or amendments offered, a motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as presented.

Motion to approve the July 6, 2026 Planning Board Meeting Minutes was made by Jerry Adams and seconded by Will Crook. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Oaths of Office for New Appointments

Oaths of Office were administered to the following members:

- Doug Helms — Second Term
- Whitney Wall — First Term

3. SUB-25-12 — Major Subdivision Review: Trillium Estates

Applicant: B & C Land Holdings, LLC Location: Concord Highway (Parcel 08204011) Zoning: RA-40 (Residential Agricultural) Request: Review of a Major Subdivision Development Plan for a proposed 51-lot residential subdivision.

Back-up Land Use Administrator Michael Harvey opened by clarifying the procedural posture of the evening's review. He noted that this was an informal review intended to allow the applicant to present the project, receive preliminary feedback from the Board, and incorporate that input into modifications prior to formal submission. He emphasized that when the project comes before the Board officially, the applicant will bear the burden of providing competent material evidence demonstrating compliance with the Town's ordinance, and that the elected officials will conduct a formal evidentiary hearing before any permit is issued.

Mr. Harvey summarized the key characteristics of the project: a 51-lot subdivision on an approximately 87-acre parcel zoned RA-40, with minimum one-acre lots. The project proposes access to public water through Union County and a centralized on-site wastewater treatment system rather than individual septic systems per lot. He noted outstanding items from internal and external review partners, including the Union County Health Department's requirement that appropriate permits be obtained prior to final plat approval, NCDOT review comments requiring the roads to be built to public road standards, coordination with emergency management regarding roadway width, and stormwater review comments from the Town's engineer.

Mr. Harvey also reminded the Board of the stormwater pre-post requirement: the developed site may discharge no more runoff than the undeveloped site currently does, and the applicant bears responsibility for capturing and treating stormwater accordingly.

Applicant Presentation

Brian Reece of R. Joe Harris and Associates, the project engineer, and Dave Fuss of Cove Point Development Group, the developer and owner, addressed the Board.

Mr. Fuss described the proposed centralized wastewater treatment system in detail. Rather than 51 individual septic systems, the project will use a single decentralized wastewater treatment facility approximately the size of a buried shipping container, managed and operated by EnviroLink, a licensed public utility in North Carolina that owns and operates hundreds of similar systems across multiple states. Each home will have its own septic tank to retain solids; liquid effluent will be pumped via low-pressure lines through a main line running in the road right-of-way to the central treatment facility. Treated water — described as meeting near-drinking water standards — will be dispersed through a subsurface drip field rather than surface spray, minimizing visual and odor impact. The system has received its state permit. Mr. Fuss noted that a fenced enclosure and supplemental tree plantings (approximately 50 to 60 trees) would screen the treatment facility, and that the drip field would resemble a hay field in appearance.

Board members raised several questions. Vice Chairman Devin Clontz asked why a centralized system was preferred over individual drain fields and inquired about the pipe routing across properties. Mr. Fuss clarified that individual lateral lines from each home connect to a single main line in the road right-of-way, avoiding pipes crossing private yards. He also noted the benefit to homeowners of not having a septic field constraining backyard improvements such as pools. Member Will Crook asked about ownership and maintenance responsibility; Mr. Fuss confirmed that EnviroLink will own and operate the entire system beyond the individual tanks, funded through a monthly fee paid by homeowners, and that the system will never become a burden to the Town.

Board members also asked about the longevity of the system and the adequacy of the drip field area, including provisions for backup areas. Mr. Fuss confirmed that state permitting requirements mandate reserve acreage in addition to the active drip field area to allow for maintenance and repair. The system uses biological treatment with no filters, and its pump components are monitored continuously via telemetry and replaced on a 5–10 year maintenance cycle.

The Board asked about the physical appearance of the homes (slab versus foundation, home size, and construction type). Mr. Fuss indicated the development would be higher-end given its infrastructure costs, though specific construction details had not been finalized. He noted the development would likely be a slow, quality build-out rather than a tract-style subdivision.

Mr. Harvey highlighted for the Board that each lot will carry an individual built-upon area (impervious surface) limit not to exceed 24 percent cumulatively across the site, as required by the Town's ordinance.

On the question of access, Vice Chairman Clontz noted that the single access point connects to NC 601, a heavily traveled thoroughfare, and asked whether turn lanes were planned. Mr. Fuss confirmed that NCDOT has required both right and left turn lanes, which the applicant found somewhat surprising given the subdivision's size but accepted as appropriate given the speed and volume of traffic on that corridor.

Public Comment

Councilman Jaren Simpson addressed the Board on behalf of adjacent property owners Dolan and Brenda Baucom, who own land on the left side of the site. He raised longstanding concerns about stormwater and drainage on the property, describing from personal observation over 40-plus years that portions of the site experience standing water of a foot or more during rain events. He identified a known spring head area on the property and indicated that drainage tiles along the adjacent road historically managed some of that flow, though he expressed concern about the adequacy of current drainage infrastructure given conditions on the site. He urged the Board and applicant to carefully consider existing topography and runoff patterns.

A nearby resident, identified as Chris Wallace, echoed those drainage concerns. He described water standing up to three feet deep in the corner of his yard during intense rain events and noted that since the applicant began preliminary site work — including trenching — the existing road tile has stopped draining effectively, resulting in water standing in the trench. He expressed concern that the completed development would worsen existing flooding conditions on his property.

Mr. Fuss acknowledged both comments, noting that the applicant has engaged with the Army Corps of Engineers and that the EPA used the site as a staging area following Hurricane Helene storm cleanup, resulting in some grade modifications. He indicated that the engineering team has modeled existing and proposed grades and stormwater flows, that some low-lying lots will be built up, and that the applicant will continue to pay attention to drainage concerns as the project progresses. He also noted that NCDOT has been engaged regarding the existing road tile and drainage infrastructure.

Mr. Harvey confirmed that the full 67-page plan set submitted to the Town includes existing topographic conditions, proposed grading, and erosion control plans, and that the applicant will be required to obtain a state erosion control permit prior to land disturbance.

Mr. Harvey summarized the Board's informal guidance: the applicant should be prepared to provide additional detail on the wastewater system's operation, confirm DOT approval of the road configuration, and address stormwater in their formal submission through a qualified subject matter expert.

4. ZC-26-02 — Rezoning Request: Keziah Property

Applicant / Property Owner: Timothy Neal Keziah Location: 623 Sikes Mill Road (Parcel 08207010) Request: Rezoning of a 2.07-acre tract from RA-40 (Residential Agricultural) to Conditional Zoning District — Light Industrial (CZ-LI) for mini warehouses (Class 1).

Mr. Harvey introduced the item, describing it as a conditional zoning request to rezone an approximately 2.07-acre portion of a 5.91-acre parcel for the sole purpose of developing a Class 1 mini warehouse facility. He noted that the surrounding zoning is Light Industrial to the north (the Van's Welding property, zoned industrial since the 1980s by Union County) and RA-40 to the south, west, and east. He explained the conditional zoning framework: the applicant is voluntarily foregoing all other permitted uses in the Light Industrial general use district and restricting the property to the single proposed use, subject to mutually agreed-upon conditions.

Mr. Harvey outlined the applicant's proposed conditions, which included: subdividing the parcel so that only the 2.07-acre portion is subject to the rezoning; compliance with the Lake Twitty watershed provisions; hours of operation limited to 6:00 AM to 9:00 PM, seven days a week; a cumulative building limit of 8,000 square feet across three structures; NCDOT driveway permit compliance; no outdoor storage of any materials (noting this is also implicit in the Class 1 definition); no storage of flammable, corrosive, or explosive materials within units; no human habitation of storage units; no electrical outlets on the exterior or interior of units; solar-powered lighting; and 24/7 camera security monitoring. He noted that the property owner lives adjacent to the site and would have direct oversight.

Mr. Harvey stated that staff recommends approval, finding the request consistent with the Town's comprehensive plan as a logical extension of the existing adjacent Light Industrial zoning, and noting that the applicant's self-imposed conditions appropriately mitigate potential impacts on neighboring residential properties.

Applicant Presentation

Michael Sandy, Principal Planner at Uwharrie Planners with 32 years of professional planning experience, presented on behalf of the applicant. He described the request as a transitional land use appropriate to buffer the higher-intensity industrial use to the north from the lower-intensity residential uses to the south. He noted that he and the property owner had worked closely with Town staff over approximately two months to develop the proposed conditions. Civil engineer Kevin Herring, with approximately 35 years of experience, was also present to address site plan, stormwater, and driveway permit questions. Mr. Herring noted that the project anticipates less than one acre of land disturbance, meaning it would not be subject to a state DEQ erosion control permit and would instead go through the Town's review process. He also noted the presence of a 20-foot public utility easement carrying a large Union County water line through the property, which constrains the available buildable area and would serve as a natural buffer between the structures and Van's Welding.

Mr. Harvey added that because the ordinance does not require buffering between Light Industrial and Light Industrial zones, there is no mandatory buffer along the northern property line, but the applicant has indicated they will work with Union County to preserve existing trees within the easement to the extent Union County's maintenance requirements permit.

Board Discussion

Board discussion reflected divided opinion. Vice Chairman Clontz made a motion to recommend denial, citing that the parcel is predominantly surrounded by RA-40 residential development, that the area is not designated in

the comprehensive plan as a future commercial or industrial district, and that the request does not constitute a logical extension of the existing industrial zone given the surrounding residential land uses. He expressed concern about the potential for the approval to encourage additional industrial expansion into what he viewed as a residential area, noting that the existing industrial zoning had been established by Union County prior to Unionville's incorporation and was, in his view, already somewhat inconsistent with the current character of the area.

The motion to recommend denial failed for lack of a second.

The Chair noted some personal ambivalence, expressing a preference for hearing more public input before making a recommendation, while acknowledging that the project technically meets ordinance requirements. Member Annette Harris raised a question regarding the proximity of the Union County water line to the proposed structures, which was addressed by the applicant's engineer. She subsequently made a motion to recommend approval, reading the approval language from the staff abstract and citing the request as a logical extension of the existing land use and zoning pattern in the area and finding that the conditional nature of the rezoning would prevent negative impacts on adjacent property owners.

The motion was seconded by the Chair.

Mr. Harvey raised a qualifying question, asking whether the motion incorporated all staff-recommended conditions and the applicant's proffered conditions. Mrs. Harris confirmed the motion included all conditions but not the 5-year vesting period that had been discussed. Following brief discussion, the applicant's representative confirmed the applicant would accept a 5-year vesting condition consistent with the current North Carolina General Statute. Mrs. Harris incorporated the 5-year vesting period into the motion.

Mr. Harvey also noted for the record that the applicant's ordinance requires a community meeting to be held prior to the elected officials' hearing, which would provide an additional opportunity for public input before final action.

Motion to recommend approval of the rezoning of Parcel 08207010 at 623 Sikes Mill Road from RA-40 to Conditional Zoning District — Light Industrial (CZ-LI) for a Class 1 mini warehouse facility, subject to all conditions recommended by staff and proffered by the applicant, including a 5-year vesting period, was made by Member Annette Harris and seconded by the Chair. The motion carried 5-1, with Vice Chairman Devin Clontz voting in opposition and one member abstaining (abstention recorded as a yes vote but noted separately). The matter will proceed to a duly advertised legislative hearing before the Town Council.

5. Other Business for Discussion

Back-up Land Use Administrator Michael Harvey advised the Board that the final draft of the Town's Unified Development Ordinance will be presented for the Board's review at the September meeting.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the Chair adjourned the meeting. All members and members of the public were thanked for their attendance.

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.