TOWN OF WEDDINGTON
REGULAR PLANNING BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, JULY 28, 2025 – 7:00 P.M.
WEDDINGTON TOWN HALL
MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chairman Chris Faulk called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. Determination of Quorum

Quorum was determined with Chairman Chris Faulk, Vice Chairman Rusty Setzer, Board members Amanda Jarrell, Bill Deter, Nancy Anderson, Scott Buzzard, and Steve Fellmeth present.

Staff present: Town Planner Gregory Gordos, Town Administrator/Clerk Karen Dewey, Admin Assistant/Deputy Clerk Debbie Coram

Visitors: Jim Bell, Chad Emerine, Clayton Jones, Tracy Stone, Jared Polivka

3. Conflict of Interest Statement: *In accordance with the state government ethics act, it is the duty of every Board member to avoid conflicts of interest. Does any Board member have any known conflict of interest with respect to any matters on the agenda? If so, please identify the conflict and refrain from any participation in the matter involved.*

Chairman Faulk read the Conflict of Interest Statement. No Board members had a conflict of interest.

4. Approval of Minutes

A. May 27, 2025 Planning Board Regular Meeting

Motion:	Board member Deter made a motion to approve the May 27, 2025 Regular Planning Board Meeting minutes.
Second:	Board member Buzzard
Vote:	The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

5. Public Comments: *Individuals are allowed 3 minutes to speak and must only comment on current agenda items. A maximum of 30 minutes is allocated to the Public Comment Period. The time limit may be extended at the discretion of the Chairman.*

Chad Emerine, 953 Eagle Road, spoke regarding item 6B on the agenda concerning Appendix 2B Submittal Requirements. He requested that the Board amend line B37 on septic requirements to keep the old verbiage of requiring septic locations, with some new wording. Mr. Emerine proposed using the current UDO row 51 language plus the notice of intent form if they use the EOP process. He argued that both serve the same purpose and that the county reviews and records both options. Mr. Emerine stated that this verbiage has been in place and should not be changed, citing conversations with Union County and state officials in wastewater. He emphasized the importance of submitting proof rather than accepting developers' word, comparing it to requiring transcripts for college admissions. Mr. Emerine also noted that this requirement has been in the UDO for years and was commonly submitted along with stormwater calculations in the past.

Board member Anderson requested to move her board comments early as she may have to leave early. The Board agreed.

Board member Anderson addressed the board, expressing confusion about when it is appropriate to speak out during meetings and when it is not. She sought clarification to ensure appropriateness in her comments, noting the importance of setting the record straight. She addressed rumors and speculation surrounding Hunter Farms and its conservation status, emphasizing that the status cannot be reversed as it is a matter of public record with deed restrictions prohibiting development. She clarified that the property, maintained by a land trust under an easement, is subject to annual audits to ensure compliance. Board member Anderson reassured the community that no commercial or residential development is possible, reflecting the farm's historical significance to the town's heritage. She concluded her comments with the statement that Perry South is not named for Councilmember Jeff Perryman.

6. Old Business

A. Discussion and Possible Recommendation of Text Amendment 2025-05 Section D-917C (A) (12) Buffering Non-residential structures. The buffer requirement is 50 feet between any commercial structures and the property line. Section D-918.I (Screening and Landscaping) lists the required plantings of trees and shrubs within buffers and the standards for planting.

Mr. Gordos explained that at a previous meeting, the Board had agreed they were not supportive of this proposal and had effectively tabled it indefinitely. He recommended that staff table this item again.

Motion: Board member Buzzard made a motion to table Discussion and Possible Recommendation of Text Amendment 2025-05 Section D-917C (A)(12) Buffering Non-residential Structures.
Second: Board member Jarrell
Vote: The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

B. Review and Recommendation of Text Amendment 2025-06 Appendix 2B Submittal Requirements

Mr. Gordos provided an overview of the comprehensive review of Appendix 2B, which covers submittal requirements for subdivisions. He explained that the intention was to clarify the materials required for schematic or sketch plans in development proposals. Mr. Gordos noted that while the town may not have authority over specific septic field types, it is within their purview to ensure proper servicing and appropriate authorizations. He mentioned that the previous Appendix 2B was somewhat ambiguous, leading to discrepancies between staff, council, and the planning board about criteria and project completeness. The revised appendix aimed to ensure all current members were on the same page and to put the onus on the planning board to ensure all items on the checklist have been met before moving forward to the town council.

Mr. Gordos presented the original language and the board's previously recommended language for the identification and delineation of proposed septic systems. He explained that based on feedback from the town council, they settled on requiring information that has already been interpreted and approved by another agency, rather than leaving it to the town's interpretation. He presented the subcommittee's revised language, which includes "with approved improvement permits or public sewer lines if applicable" and defines what delineation means in this context. He emphasized that this change requires applicants to provide information that has been recognized and reviewed by an appropriate agency, typically the county or state. Board member Deter noted that a landscape plan for entrances, which was mentioned in a previous council meeting, is already included in the appendix as item B26.

After discussion, the board agreed to recommend the revised language for item B27 (previously B37) in the Appendix 2B.

Motion:	Board member Setzer made a motion to approve Text Amendment 2025-06 Appendix 2B Submittal Requirements
Second:	Board member Anderson
Vote:	The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

7. New Business

A. Discussion of Designation of Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Board member Deter introduced the topic, explaining that it stemmed from a discussion at the last council meeting about actions the town takes to protect environmentally sensitive areas. The Board discussed the complexity of defining and identifying such areas, with Board member Setzer expressing concern about potentially overreaching or impeding progress. Mr. Gordos explained that this discussion was council-directed and related to goals in the comprehensive plan. He noted that while the planning board is not qualified to designate sensitive areas, Staff has considered this goal when selecting engineering firms for town projects. Mr. Gordos mentioned that a thorough analysis could be costly, potentially running into hundreds of thousands of dollars. The Board agreed that further information and direction from the town council would be needed before proceeding with any specific actions on this topic.

B. Discussion of Overhead Utility Wires

Board member Fellmeth introduced the topic, expressing concern about abandoned poles and wires in town, particularly along major roads like Providence Road. He suggested exploring ways for the town to be involved in addressing this issue, acknowledging the complexities of working with utility companies and the Department of Transportation (DOT). The board discussed the challenges of removing or relocating utility poles, including jurisdictional issues, costs, and the need for cooperation between multiple entities. They also considered the impact of overhead wires on tree preservation efforts and aesthetics in new developments. Chairman Faulk and Mr. Gordos provided insights on the process of pole removal and the town's ability to influence utility placement in new developments. The board agreed that further investigation and communication with utility companies and the DOT would be beneficial. No action was taken, but Board member Fellmeth was encouraged to continue researching the issue and communicating with relevant agencies.

8. Update from Town Planner and Report from the July Town Council Meeting

Mr. Gordos reported that the town council was supportive of the revamp of Appendix 2B, with the exception of the one item discussed earlier in the meeting. He also mentioned a presentation by Keystone Custom Homes for a conservation-type subdivision, noting that they were advised to adhere as closely as possible to the new Appendix 2B requirements, even though it's not yet official. Mr. Gordos informed the board that the town is increasing fees for developers and is still seeking to hire an assistant planner, with plans to advertise the position more widely.

9. Board member Comments

Board members expressed appreciation for the productive meeting and the hard work of staff and fellow board members. Mr. Gordos commended the current board members for their exceptional dedication and extra work on text amendments

10. Adjournment

Motion:	Board member Deter made a motion to adjourn at 7:56 p.m.
Second:	Board member Buzzard
Vote:	The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Approved: September 22, 2025