

**TOWN OF UNIONVILLE
PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING**

The Planning Board of the Town of Unionville met on Monday, May 2, 2022, at Town Hall, 1102 Unionville Church Road, Monroe, NC. Chairman Jerry Adams, Board members Steven Outen, Barry Baucom, Andy Fowler, Devin Clontz, Roddie Baucom, and Alternates Doug Helms and Kevin JR Hayes were present. Matt Price was absent.

Everyone stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag, after which Jerry Adams led the prayer of invocation. Chairman Adams called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. He then called Alternate Kevin JR Hayes forward for Land Use Administrator Gaddy to issue his oath of office. Chairman Adams then asked Kevin to sit in on the meeting for Matt Price.

Next, Chairman Adams brought forward the consideration of the minutes of the April 4, 2022, Regular Meeting. After a motion made by Steve Outen and seconded by Roddie Baucom, the Board unanimously approved the minutes from April 4, 2022, Regular Meeting.

In the next item of business, Chairman Adams opened the floor for the consideration of Subdivision #SUB-22-02 to form one new lot on Sikes Mill Road. Land Use Administrator Gaddy stated that this is a parcel divided into two lots, with one new lot without road frontage. Each lot will end up with a little over 3.5 acres. Lot 8 had an existing easement to Sikes Mill Road. Lot 9 crosses several properties, but it does have the required easement to Sikes Mill Road. Union County has approved the subdivision and it meets all requirements, so she recommends Planning Board approval. Devin Clontz asked how much acreage was on Lot 2. Land Use Administrator Gaddy advised Devin that they were reviewing Lot 9. Devin asked how the easement would affect Lot 2. Land Use Administrator Gaddy said that the landowner of Lot 2 has agreed to the easement and signed the mylar, fulfilling the requirements. Devin said that it looked like they would share a driveway to the backdoor step. Land Use Administrator Gaddy stated that the Town does not regulate drives, so that would not be within our jurisdiction. Upon a motion made by Roddie Baucom, seconded by Steve Outen, the motion passed in a split vote of 6-1.

Next, Chairman Adams brought forward the recommendation of Land Use Plan 2022 updates, which was tabled from April's Planning Board meeting. Members of the public came forward to address the Board about their concerns.

Tom Crouch, representing Moser Group (owners of the property behind the convenience store) addressed the Board first. He said that Moser Group opposes the change because this intersection is the only one up for sewer in the next five years. This would be the only site for a potential grocery store. This site is the one that grocers want. He said that they love working with local municipalities and want to keep it a high-density node for that reason. Steve Outen asked Mr. Crouch if sewer access was planned for this area. Mr. Crouch said that this was the closest to the gravity lines down now, but there are no plans currently.

Land Use Administrator Gaddy told the Board that this is not a proposal for rezoning. This is just for the land use plan, a general guide.

David Daniel, of Tom Helms Road, said that he would like to add something about the future sewer capacity. He told the Board that when that sewer capacity comes, right now there's a little capacity here. If we change that commercial node and keep zoning residential, it would be subdivided for homes. He said that if the Board thinks we have traffic now at the roundabout, wait until we get those

subdivisions. If we don't get on the same team and allow some managed, strategic commercial growth, the same thing that happened to Waxhaw and Indian Trail, will happen to us. They dug in for no growth, shut all that commercial down, the zoning that was already there, more people kept coming. Now I'm in Unionville and we'll be in the same way. We won't have sewer access for 20 years. Here, there will be and there's some capacity now. By using local developers, we can tell them we want it our way, like a homestyle grocery store. He is not advocating for a Walmart-type of store. He hopes to help create jobs for our kids because his daughter had to go to Locust to get a job. He said that he was just waving the white flag again.

LaNae Haigler, of Tom Helms Road, addressed the Board and said that when we look at the faces of the men who are service members of Unionville Town government, we are reminded of our history. There is no need to make any major change to the 2006 Land Use Plan. She asked the Board to keep Five Forks as a future land-use node and to keep politics out of the decision-making process. She said they need to stop hiding behind the flimsy excuses of safety and water runoff. Allow commercial growth to catch up with residential development. Offer the opportunity to spend Unionville money in Unionville. Unionville may not want the tax dollars that businesses generate, but Union County did. Sonya Gaddy said that the decision was made based on the 10% who responded to the survey. 90% is a silent majority and it does not justify the vote. As an act of fairness, she respectfully asked that all adjacent landowners recuse themselves from the voting process on this matter.

Tim Keziah, Sikes Mill Road, told the Board that he would like to say that when Union County made its zoning plan, the county allowed the convenience store at Five Forks. It was needed and is used a lot. We now have a traffic circle, which was needed and is used. It has saved countless lives because that was a dangerous intersection. Traffic circles and busy intersections usually dictate where business takes place. He said that it is wrong to remove Five Forks as a designated area for commercial development. He asked why Five Forks had always been identified as a commercial development node, but now the Town Council wants to remove it. He went on to say that businesses do not cause traffic. People who move here cause traffic. People are going to continue to come to Unionville partly because we have the best three schools in Union County. He said that we need smart, planned growth and Five Forks is the perfect place for it. He then said that Unionville is on the fast track to becoming "the asshole town of NC", not because of the town, but because of a few selfish people who will not allow Unionville to progress. As more people come, there will be more subdivisions, more people up and down 601, 200, to Monroe to shop. We need people to spend their money here. The Town of Unionville is not an "asshole". He loves Unionville, was born and raised here, and it is a great place. Some commercial growth would reduce traffic congestion on the main thoroughfare. He concluded by saying that the town could give people back the control they had taken away in the past by giving back those land uses.

There being no others in attendance to speak, Chairman Adams then moved forward with the consideration of the Land Use Plan recommendations. He said that all the policies or uses weren't pre-approved nodes, they were just recommended in the original Land Use Plan as desirable areas for potential development. Land Use Administrator Gaddy then went over the proposed changes. Page 1 amendments reflect the existence of the Monroe Expressway. Page 2 amendments added a survey explanation. Page 3 amendments under policies (and a couple of other places) reflect that conditional district has been changed to conditional rezoning. Page 4 amendments reflect having been told 8-10 years for sewer by Union County. Page 5 amendment to policies reflects the move to the Highway 601 corridor based on the survey and Council's decision about Dollar General. Barry Baucom said that when looking at the survey, we cannot suggest based on what people did not respond to and he appreciated that. The

Planning Board let the mini-storage unit go forward to Council and they hear things on a case-by-case basis. They will have to take one decision at a time and look at what is needed at the time. Three percent responded wanting the roundabout, if we leave it in as an opportunity, but take it on a case-by-case basis as it is presented before the town, he asked if they could put it [future commercial] back in there, but still take the opportunity to review requests as they are brought before the town. Devin Clontz asked if all commercial property must have sewer access. Tom Crouch said that most grocery stores want sewer access. With just septic, stores with one restroom and one occupancy and it would cut meat prep. Only having septic allows for stores like Dollar General, lower use areas. Jerry Adams asked if it [future commercial] is taken out if a grocery store would be a viable possibility. Barry Baucom asked if it would be considered a special use. Land Use Administrator Gaddy said that Council could approve it, but she would not be able to say that it fit within our Land Use Plan. Steve Outen said that he felt like it was a knee jerk reaction. On the survey, the highest was on 601, but the second highest was on the roundabout. That's been there since 2006.

David Daniel said that the folks that responded to the survey voted for 601 and they have no idea that there won't be sewer access there for 20 years. They don't know what we know. They're not going to have sewer. Folks cast their ballot for that with no idea. The way you word a poll you can get the reaction that you want. Folks think they're comparing apples to apples, but they're not.

Devin Clontz asked how the Planning Board would confirm the sewer access timeline. Land Use Administrator Gaddy said that Union County recently came to a meeting for the Town Council. They said it would take 10 years from the time it was decided to put sewer access into place. If we're discussing a property, we're talking about something that can't happen within the planning cycle. I'm not even sure any of these nodes will be there if we can't do anything about it until we update our plan again. Maybe there will be further plans/designs. Steve Outen said that he thought sewer access was beside the point.

Wendy Griffin of Benton Acres said that she understood that the Board would have to come back to the table at that time. She asked if the Board had information about planning for the grocery store, if you take this out, if it would create an issue since things would have to be approved. She asked if there would be an opportunity for sewer access in the next seven years, why not leave it [Five Forks] in as future commercial. She said that her parents are elderly and drive out to New Salem and live two miles from the roundabout. She asked the board not to take this out and miss the opportunity to have it.

Steven Outen asked Mr. Crouch how long it would take to open a grocery store when his company starts a plan. Mr. Crouch said it would take about three years. They would present a plan, go before a vote with the Town Council and those processes take from 60 days to at least 6 months. They then must get the right zoning in place, get an engineer to design their plan, have the municipality review the store, and then begin contract negotiations, which would take another 6 months. At a minimum, the process will take 3-5 years.

Steve Outen then suggested they leave Five Forks corridor as future commercial and take applications on a one-by-one basis.

Scott Griffin said that he was 57 years old, lived in Union County all my life. He said that Unionville is the largest mass area of any municipality, it was a shame that an area with the largest mass had no growth in commercial development. He said that Fairview is looking over us and will take advantage of us. Fairview is waiting for us to continue to look like a place that's not a part of Union

County. We've had no growth, we're not a part of Union County. He said that Unionville is a dead man's land.

Steve Outen made a motion that the revised land use plan be recommended except for adding in the Five Forks for future commercial use. The motion was seconded by Barry Baucom. Roddie Baucom recused himself from the vote. The recommendation passed in a split vote of 5 – 1.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Melody Braswell, Deputy Clerk