

TOWN OF SMITHFIELD PLANNING BOARD AGENDA PACKET



Chairman: Stephen Upton

Vice-Chairman: Daniel Sanders

Members:

Mark Lane

Ashley Spain

Michael Taylor

Eddie Foy

Teresa Daughtry

Oliver Johnson (Alt)

Stephen Wensman, AICP, ALA, Planning Director

Mark Helmer, AICP, Senior Planner

Julie Edmonds, Administrative Assistant

Meeting Date: *Thursday, April 5, 2018*

Meeting Time: *6:00 p.m.*

Meeting Place: *Council Chambers, Smithfield Town Hall*

**AGENDA
PLANNING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 5, 2018
MEETING TIME: 6:00 PM
TOWN HALL**

Call to Order.

Identify voting members

Approval of the agenda.

Approval of the minutes for March 1, 2018

New Business

Items for discussion

Article 9 of the Unified Development Ordinance: Article 9 is complex and not in conformity with the duties of the Board of Adjustments as found in Article 3, Section 3.4 of the UDO. Staff is requesting the Planning Board review Article 9 for future amendment.

Article 10, Part IX, Section 10.91: This section contains the performance standards for properties within the Entry Corridor Overlay District. The overlay district proposed and standards should be reviewed to determine whether the purposes is still relevant and makes sense and whether the standards reinforce the overlay's intended purpose and whether the stated purpose.

Connectivity Report: The Town of Smithfield Planning Board is requested to review the document and supporting information as it pertains to street connectivity and to provide direction on any needed changes in the Town plans or ordinances.

Old Business

Administrative Actions report

Land Use Permit Report for February, 2018
Board Actions Report for February, 2018

Adjournment

Draft
Smithfield Planning Board Minutes
Thursday, March 1, 2018
6:00 P.M., Town Hall, Council Chambers

Members Present:

Chairman Stephen Upton
Oliver Johnson
Mark Lane
Michael Taylor
Eddie Foy
Teresa Daughtry
Ashley Spain

Members Absent:

Daniel Sanders

Staff Present:

Mark Helmer, Senior Planner
Julie Edmonds, Administrative Assistant

Staff Absent:

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Upton identified the Planning Board members as well as, Planning Department staff.

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES from February 1, 2018

Eddie Foy made a motion, seconded by Teresa Daughtry to approve the minutes as written.
Unanimous

New Business

ZA-18-02 Town of Smithfield:

The Town of Smithfield is required to adopt the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) revised Flood Insurance Study (FIS) for Johnston County which includes both the revised Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) and North Carolina Model Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance as developed by the North Carolina Department of Public Safety. Adoption of the FIS and mandatory revisions to the Town of Smithfield's existing Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance must occur no later than June 20, 2018. Failure to adopt the FIS and make the mandatory revisions to the Town of Smithfield Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) within the time allotted will result in the Town of Smithfield being suspended from the Nation Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and all flood insurance policies within the Town of Smithfield's planning and zoning jurisdiction will be canceled. The Planning Department is requesting adoption of revised Flood Insurance Study (FIS) for Johnston County and amendments to the Town of Smithfield Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance for continued participation and compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program. There are two parts to the Flood Insurance Study, one is the map and the other is the ordinance. North Carolina is going to all

digital flood insurance maps. They're available online by logging onto the Flood Risk Information System webpage. There are approximately 1,200 properties within the Smithfield city limits and ETJ that are affected by flood plain. Sandy Run will have around 86 properties removed as well as 66 structures from the 100 year flood plain.

Mr. Foy asked what was meant by 1,200 properties being affected.

Mr. Helmer said there are 1,200 properties currently within flood hazard areas within the Town of Smithfield.

Mr. Foy asked if these properties required flood insurance.

Mr. Helmer said yes, however some properties are pasture, some adjacent to the Neuse River, some woodland and some subdivisions.

Mr. Foy asked if there are areas in the flood zone now that weren't before.

Mr. Helmer said yes, more properties are being removed from the 100 year flood plain than added.

Mr. Lane asked why these properties are being removed.

Mr. Helmer said the Town of Smithfield has been going back and forth with FEMA and Emergency Management to get them to understand that's not a flood plain and never has been. We finally found proof on the ground. There is another culvert going under the railroad tracks. Once found we passed it along, they plugged it into their model and ran the information again. They now understand it isn't a flood plain.

Mr. Johnson asked if the property owners in the flood plain have been notified they may need flood insurance.

Mr. Helmer said yes, as part of FEMA's process they notified the public and held public hearings in which the public was invited to attend. Now it is left to us to adopt a map, we will run a half page ad in the newspaper with the map on it. We will let everyone know there will be a public hearing and Town Council will receive public comment.

Mrs. Daughtry asked if there were drainage issues that would not normally cause this area to flood.

Mr. Helmer said sometimes channelization will cause flooding.

Mrs. Daughtry said she asked because if you look behind Cox Repair, there's a ditch. It has been filled in multiple times. Therefore, when it rains that water has nowhere to go.

Mr. Helmer said ponding is different than flooding. Ponding happens when the ditch isn't deep enough. The water is always going to make it downhill to the creek.

Mr. Upton asked if these proposed changes would be adopted by Johnston County.

Mr. Helmer said yes, all communities in Johnston County have to adopt the flood study.

Mr. Helmer said we've got the map portion of that study, next would be the text of the Flood Damage Prevention Model. We're required to update to reflect the changes being mandated.

Summary of Mandatory Changes:

- Required determination by UDO Administrator of market value, repair value and make a determination as to whether substantial damages or substantial improvement thresholds are met and to notify the applicant of the findings.
- Required time period for use in establishing substantial damages and substantial improvements.
- Failure to comply with UDO Administrator orders for correction of violation will be classified as a Class 1 misdemeanor pursuant to NC G.S 143-215.58.
- Penalties for violations are increasing from \$50 to \$100 per day
- All electrical, heating, air conditioning and ventilation for new construction will be required to be 2 feet above base flood elevations or be water tight.
- Alteration and repairs are no longer classified as new construction.
- Non-residential structures with basements shall be no lower than 2 feet above base flood elevation or be constructed of robust material and flood proofed.
- All above ground fuel tanks must be elevated two (2) feet above base flood elevation or be strapped down.
- Use of NAVD 1988 vertical datum will replace the use of mean sea level tidal datum
- Minor text changes design to clarify existing regulations.
- Additional definitions of commonly used terms.

Summary of Voluntary Changes:

- Prohibit fill within a special food hazard area which is currently allowed. Staff recommends no change.
- Increase in freeboard which is currently set at two (2) feet. Staff recommends no change.
- Fully enclosed area of new construction or substantially improved structure which is below the lowest floor shall not be temperature controlled. (Staff recommended)
- A statement is placed on the permit stating that all material below the base flood elevation must be made from flood resistant material. (Staff recommended)
- Property owner requirement to execute and record a non-conversion agreement for spaces below the lowest floor and agree to annual inspections by Town staff. (Staff does not recommend)
- Required time period for establishing substantial damages and substantial improvements. Time period language required but period can vary based on community needs. Staff recommends 1 year for substantial improvements and 10 years for substantial damages. The substantial damage threshold is more stringent to avoid repetitive loss penalties to property

owners that include ineligibility for Increased Cost of Compliance (ICC) benefits that are often needed for required elevating of flood damaged structures.

Mrs. Daughtry said there has to be a point where you don't allow residents to rebuild that live in these flood prone areas.

Mr. Helmer said Emergency Management can make that call whether it's cheaper to buy out someone or continue to make a repetitive claim. It isn't handled at the local level such as the Town of Smithfield.

Mr. Upton said having heard this information and given the Planning Department has been given the extensive study; it all seems to be for the benefit of the Town. He asked if any board members had questions concerning Mr. Helmer's presentation.

Mr. Foy made a motion to approve ZA-18-02, the Flood Study and UDO Ordinance Amendment based on the fact the Planning Board finds the study consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. It identifies and recommends areas within the floodway as conservation districts. Also the Planning Board finds the Flood Insurance Study of Johnston County an ordinance amendment, is reasonable in the public interest and reduces the loss of life and property damage caused by flooding. He makes a motion that the Planning Board approves the Flood Study and the UDO ordinance amendment. Seconded by Teresa Daughtry. Unanimous.

ZA-17-06 Town of Smithfield

The Planning Department is requesting text amendments to Appendix A, Article 7 and Article 10 of the Town of Smithfield Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) that removes inconsistencies within the text and clarifies development standards as they pertain to flag lots and cul-de-sac streets.

Analysis:

The proposed zoning ordinance amendment will clarify development standards by:

- Creating a more descriptive definition of a flag lot;
- Eliminating inconsistent standards concerning flag lots;
- Establishing a flag lot width that can accommodate a standard public right-of-way and that will not hinder future planning and development efforts;
- Revising maximum cul-de-sac lengths within manufactured home parks.

Flag Lots:

Flag lots are so named because of the long, slender strips of land resembling flag poles that extend from the typically rectangular main sections of these lots — or the “flags” — out to the street. Each “flag pole” typically provides just enough street frontages for vehicle access and is often shared by several neighbors. Flag lots can also be thought of as permitted lots with reduced street frontage that allow access to otherwise landlocked parcel acreage. Use of flag lots recognizes the environmental and economic advantages in substituting private drive

lengths to tap land that would require additional street length and potentially greater disturbance and infrastructure costs.

The negative attributes of flag lots include potential burden on property owners to maintain longer driveways or private streets lengths, potential access constraints for emergency vehicles, and possible house-to-house relationships as flag lot dwellings may be perceived to be in the rear yards of the adjacent residences. In most cases however, the biggest drawback from creating flag lots is that no further land divisions or intensive land uses can occur when the property does not and cannot ever front on a public street due to inadequate land reserves needed for the construction of a public street from the existing public street to the flag portion of the lot to be divided. However, judicious use of flag lot arrangements can provide distinct benefits in residential design when its use, resulting lot size, dwelling orientation and access considerations are based on sound planning and community design criteria. With these considerations in mind, the Town of Smithfield Unified Development Ordinance has retained language allowing for newly created flag lots. The proposed amendment clarifies the existing flag lot provisions by creating a better definition of a flag lot. It will require flag lot dimensions to meet or exceed the underlying zoning district dimensional standards and sets the flag pole portion of the lot to a minimum width of 60' measured at the public right-of-way and were the pole portion of the lot intersects the flag portion of the lot.

Mrs. Daughtry asked if this had been a frequent problem here in Town.

Mr. Helmer said it happens more often in the ETJ because in more rural areas farmers are selling off road frontage or giving it away to other family members.

Mrs. Daughtry asked as an example, when you pass the airport and get to Rock Pillar Rd. on the left hand side, there's a house there. The property owner sold off lots toward the front of the property. Would the land owner have to change their driveway in order to build the other lots into housing?

Mr. Helmer said yes, all newly created lots have to front on a public street. If they would want to further divide behind the lots that front the public street they would have to build a road back there.

Mrs. Daughtry asked if this was required so Fire and EMS have easier access.

Mr. Helmer said yes

Cul-De-Sacs Street:

Cul-de-sac lots street frontage requirements will remain at 25'. The proposed ordinance amendment will clarify conflicting cul-de-sac length standards by increasing the maximum cul-de-sac length within planned manufactured home parks to 750 linear feet making them identical to traditional subdivisions standards.

Eddie Foy made a motion to approve ZA-17-06 based on the fact that the Planning Board finds the ordinance amendment is consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, which identifies the need for consistent roadway standards throughout the Towns Planning and Zoning district. The Planning Board finds the ordinance amendment is reasonable and will create standards that will apply to all proposed projects equally and fairly. Therefore the Planning Board recommends approval of the UDO Ordinance Amendment, which standardizes cul-de-sac streets and flag lot standards. Seconded by Teresa Daughtry. Unanimous.

Administrative Actions Report

Land Use Permit Report for January 1, 2017 through February 22, 2018

Site plans currently in review or approved as of March 1, 2018.

- Dollar General, West Market Street
- Penn Compression Molding, Inc., Components Drive
- Ample Storage, West Market Street
- Panera Bread, East Market Street
- Ford Dealership, North Brightleaf Boulevard

Next Planning Board Meeting:

Our next Planning Board Meeting is scheduled for April 5th, 2018 at 6:00 pm.

Mrs. Daughtry asked that the Planning Department staff further investigate the need for stub outs. She would like to know what other towns have done and report back to the Board at the next meeting.

Mrs. Daughtry made a motion that the Town invest time bringing back information based on similarities of Smithfield and whether these stub outs were a good or bad idea. Seconded by Eddie Foy. Unanimous.

Mark Lane made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Teresa Daughtry. Unanimous

Submitted this 2nd day of March, 2018

Julie Edmonds
Administrative Assistant
Planning Department



Request for Planning Board Review

**Agenda
Item:**
Date: 4/5/18

Subject: Article 9 – Nonconforming Situations
Department: Planning
Presented by: Stephen Wensman
Presentation: N/A

Issue Statement

Article 9 of the UDO is complex and not in conformity with the duties of the Board of Adjustments found in Article 3, Section 3.4 of the UDO. Staff is requesting the Planning Board review Article 9 for future amendment.

Financial Impact

None

Action Needed

Review Article 9 for a future text amendment

Recommendation

Review Article 9 for a future text amendment and provide comment/recommendations for changes.

Approved: Town Manager Town Attorney

Attachments:

1. Current UDO Article 9
2. Example Nonconformity Codes from Charlotte and Ashville
3. UNC Coates Canons on the issue



Staff Report

Agenda
Item:

ISSUE:

Article 9 of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) regulates nonconforming situations. Nonconforming situations are those which legally exist but fail to comply with the current provisions of the UDO. Structures, lots and uses can be nonconforming.

The stated intent of Article 9 is to permit to continue until they are removed, discontinued, or destroyed, but not to encourage such continued use, and to prohibit the expansion of any nonconformance.

The current Article 9 is problematic, from Staff's perspective, because it is overly complicated, subjective, allows for authorizations or permits by the Board of Adjustments (BOA) that is not within their listed powers in Article 3, and may not be in keeping with the intent of the ordinance.

In several places, Article 9 states that the Board of Adjustments (BOA) is allowed to "authorize" or "issue permits" to allow nonconforming situations, while Article 3 of the UDO does not specifically grant these powers to the BOA. Also, Article 9 does not distinguish what type of permit the BOA should grant, and in practice, the Town of Smithfield BOA only issues variances and appeals.

The current UDO Article 9 allows the BOA to issue permits under the following sections:

- In Section 9.2.3.6 the BOA can issue a permit to allow major renovation of nonconformities.
- In Section 9.2.3.9 the BOA can issue a permit to rebuild a structure that is destroyed if the work exceeds 10 percent of the appraised value if the work will not be more incompatible than the original.
- In Section 9.5.4, the BOA can issue a permit authorizing a change from a nonconforming use to a lesser nonconforming use.
- In Section 9.6.2, the BOA can issue a permit to a nonconforming use that has been discontinued for more than 180 consecutive days with findings.

The current UDO Article 9 allows the BOA to authorize nonconforming situations, but it is unclear whether this is by permit or variance:

- In section 9.3.2, a nonconforming structure can be enlarged, extended, reconstruct, moved or altered if it will be used for a conforming use after authorization of the BOA.

In Section 9.6.1 and 9.6.3 the BOA is to consider "intent" of the applicant in making its decision. It is difficult to regulate intent and often the intent of a property owner is difficult to know.

Section 9.5.3.2 allows the UDO Administrator to waive requirements of the UDO when compliance is not reasonably possible. This is a very subjective criterion.

Within Article 10, there are several sections that address nonconformities such as 10.32, 10.91.4.7, 10.93.9.2. These sections should be reviewed to determine whether the regulations belong in Article 9.

UDO UPDATE:

Article 9 of the UDO was updated in August 2, 2017 with the overhaul of the entire UDO. Since its codification, Staff has found a number of issues with the UDO and has brought them to the attention of Dale Holland, the UDO Consultant who has agreed to review and make some limited revisions to the Code. One section he will be reviewing is Article 9. Because of the complexity of this Article and because of its potential impact on property owners with nonconforming property, of which there are many in the Town, Staff felt it begin the discussion with the Planning Board about the need for revisions in order to prepare for a future zoning text amendment.



Request for Planning Board Review

Agenda

Item:

Date: 4/5/18

Subject: Article 10 – Entry Corridor Overlay District

Department: Planning

Presented by: Stephen Wensman

Presentation: N/A

Issue Statement

Article 10, Part IX, Section 10.91 contains the performance standards for properties within the Entry Corridor Overlay District. The overlay district purposed and standards should be reviewed to determine whether the purposes is still relevant and makes sense and whether the standards reinforce the overlay's intended purpose and whether the stated purpose.

Financial Impact

None

Action Needed

Review Article 10, Part IX, Section 10.91

Recommendation

Review Article 10, Part IX, Section 10.91 and provide comment/recommendations for changes.

Approved: Town Manager Town Attorney

Attachments:

1. Staff report
2. Article 10, Part IX, Section 10.91



Staff Report

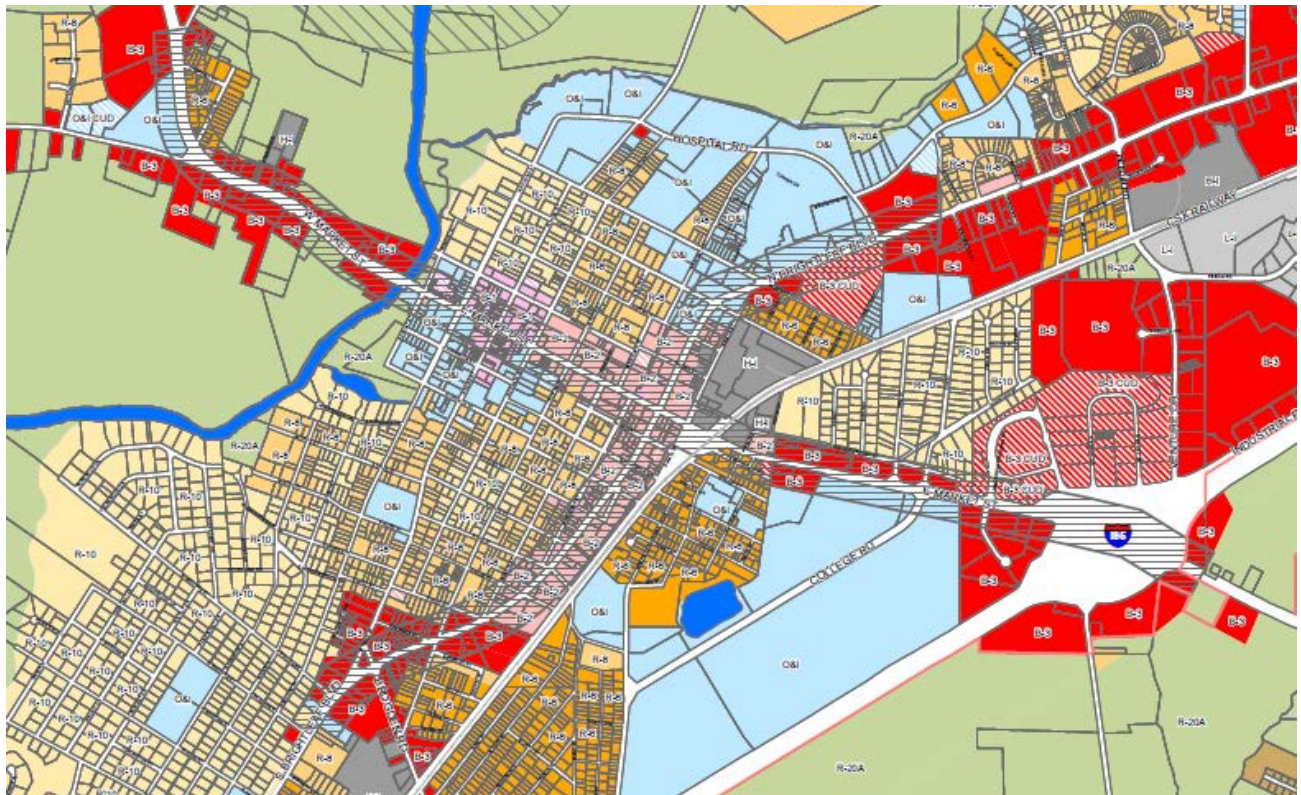
Agenda
Item:

ISSUE:

Article 10, Part IX, Section 10.91 contains the purpose and sets forth performance standards for properties within the entry corridor overlay. The overlay has been part of the UDO for many years, even before the current UDO revisions. Apparently, the standards have been applied unevenly by Town Staff over the years, at times being ignored completely. Given the size and varied character of the existing corridors and the varied sizes, shapes and character of the properties within it, Staff believes a review of the overlay is warranted.

OVERLAY ZONE:

The overlay district extends from the old K-Mart on West Market Street to the south side of I-95 on East Market Street and from East Sanders Street and S Brightleaf Boulevard to Hospital Road on North Brightleaf Boulevard.



OVERLAY ZONE PURPOSE:

The stated overlay zone purpose is:

The purpose for establishing these entry corridor overlay districts is first, to recognize the importance that different roadway corridors play in defining the town's character as town entryways and, second, to protect and preserve both the aesthetics of these important roadways and their traffic-handling capabilities, thereby contributing to the general welfare of the Town of Smithfield.

The purpose statement suggests that there are more than one entry overlay district, but it is actually a single zone with a character that is highly variable. The purpose statement also suggests the zone will serve to protect the aesthetics, yet it is unclear which aesthetic is being protected. Lastly, the statement suggests the standards are protecting their traffic-handling capabilities. It is unclear how the regulations achieve this purpose.

SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE STANDARD ISSUES:

The district spans the B-1, B-2 and B-3 zoning districts, each with differing setbacks. Section 10.91.4.2 recognizes the existing setbacks, but allows a reduced setback to a minimum principal setback of 10' from the right-of-way line if parking is placed in the rear of the structure. There will also be subsequent 20% reductions in landscaping and parking. It appears the ordinance is trying to provide an incentive to a developer for locating parking in the rear of the structure by reducing setbacks, parking and landscaping. The specific issues include:

- Comprehensive Plan Guidance – The comprehensive plan establishes the community vision and strategies for achieving the vision. Zoning is a tool to achieve the comprehensive plan. The current comprehensive plan provides little to no guidance on corridor zoning, other than preserving trees, interconnecting parking lots, limiting access, and preserving right of way. The purpose of the overlay district is not clearly established in the comprehensive plan or the zoning district regulations. It is unclear what the intended result of the overlay zoning is.
- One size fits all zoning overlay district - The character of the corridors vary significantly from traditional urban development of the Downtown to old Malls and auto-sales lots. Applying a single standard for may not achieve the intended result, whatever that may be.
- Flexibility/setback variability – Although it appears to be an incentive, the overlay zoning is more likely to provide a developer increased flexibility if it suits their bottom line, rather than achieving a specific aesthetic in the corridor or achieving any specific community benefit. The long term result of the ordinance may be even more variability in the corridors with setbacks ranging from 10' to 50'.
- Section 10.2.1 is in conflict with Section 10.91.4.2 by requiring all parking in the overlay district be in the rear of the structure, rather than an incentivized option.
- Signs – Within the overlay zoning regulations, Section 10.91.4.5 provides specific sign regulations for properties within the overlay zoning. This section would best be located within the sign ordinance and referenced herein. Typically, sign permits come later in a

project and it is typical for Staff to review the sign ordinance for requirements and the regulations are easily missed if contained in elsewhere in the UDO.

- Nonconformities – Section 10.91.4.7 provides reference to Article 9, yet also sets forth regulation on when a structure can be rebuilt in the event of destruction. Staff believes the reference to Article 9 is appropriate, but regulation on when a structure can be rebuilt should be moved entirely to Section 9.

CONSIDERATIONS:

The Planning Board should review the overlay district. Possible discussions could include

- Purpose – What is the overarching purpose for the overlay and what is the Town intending to achieve by the zoning, i.e. specific aesthetic such as reduced setbacks
- Does a single overlay district achieve the intended result? Should the district be reduced in size or should there be several overlay districts, each with differing standards?
- Should the regulations be incentivized, or should they be mandatory? If it's an incentive, then how does the Town achieve consistent setbacks or a unified theme for the corridor or corridors? What provisions should be mandatory?
- The properties within the corridor vary greatly and in some cases, the overlay could cause some unintended hardships on property owner, such as providing drive access, pedestrian access, buffering, meeting parking requirements, etc.

REQUEST:

Staff is requesting the Planning Board to review the Entry Corridor Overlay Zoning Regulations and provide guidance on a future Zoning Text Amendment.



**Planning Board Request
for Information
Concerning Street
Connectivity and
Sidewalks**

Street Connectivity

Date: 04/05/2018

Subject: Complete Streets and Street Connectivity

Department: Planning

Presented by: Mark E. Helmer, Senior Planning

Presentation: Informational Item

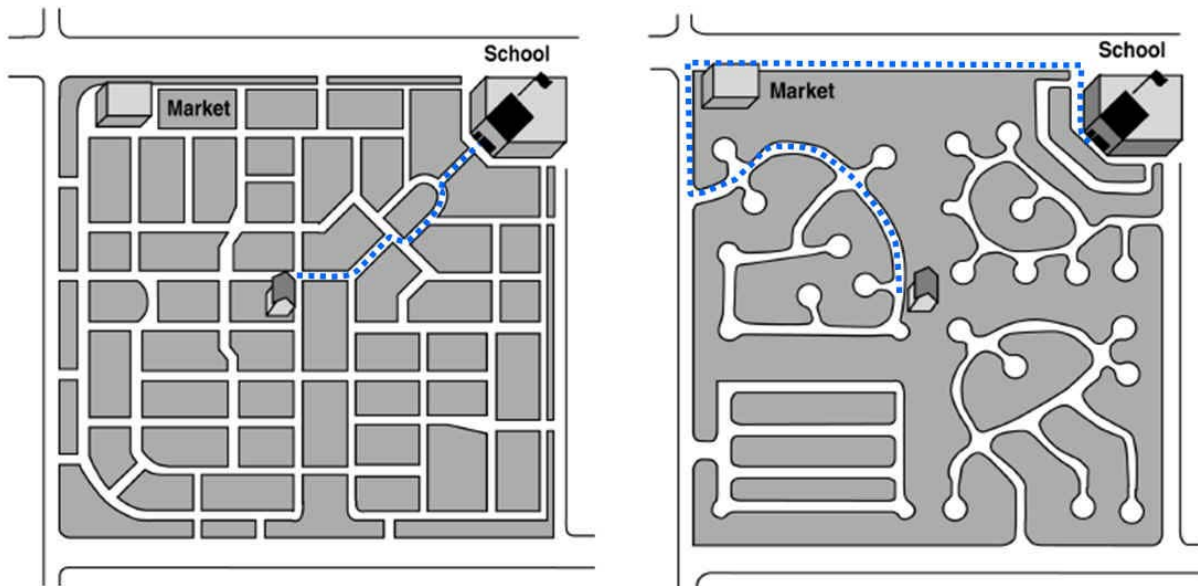
In response to the Town of Smithfield Planning Board request for information pertaining to street connectivity and sidewalks requirements, the Town of Smithfield Planning Department has gathered information from multiple sources.

The subject of connectivity and sidewalks are components of a larger concept called Complete Streets and is one the most studied topics in the Urban Planning profession. Complete Streets can be thought of as streets that are for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They allow buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to various local destinations.

The term “street connectivity” suggests a system of streets with multiple routes and connections serving the same origins and destinations. Connectivity not only relates to the number of intersections along a segment of street, but how an entire area is connected by the transportation system. A well-designed, highly-connected network helps reduce the volume of traffic and traffic delays on major streets (arterials and major collectors), and ultimately improves livability in communities by providing parallel routes and alternative route choices. By increasing the number of street connections or local street intersections in communities, bicycle and pedestrian travel also is enhanced. A well-planned, connected network of collector roadways allows a transit system to operate more efficiently.

Over the last forty to fifty years, residential and non-residential development patterns have been created that lack internal vehicular and pedestrian connectivity. The lack of connectivity has created a physical environment that lacks mobility options and pedestrian friendly features. Development trends during the 1960s and '70s encouraged building residential communities with few street connections and numerous cul-de-sacs. It was assumed that communities built with this type of street design had less traffic and fewer traffic delays on neighborhood streets. A recent Metro Portland study found these assumptions to be false. Residential subdivisions that are dominated by cul-de-sacs provide discontinuous street networks, reduced the number of sidewalks, provided few alternate travel routes and forces all trips onto a limited number of arterial roads.

Figure 1 illustrates a more traditional, interconnected development pattern compared to a disconnected, development pattern of the late 20th century.



Local street connectivity provides for both intra- and inter-neighborhood connections to knit developments together, rather than forming barriers between them. The street configuration within each parcel must contribute to the street system of the neighborhood. Research has shown that high roadway connectivity can result in:

- Reduction in travel distance (VMT) for drivers
- Reduction in travel times for drivers;
- Better and redundant emergency vehicle access;
- More efficient public services access (mail, garbage, transit)
- Improved bicycle and pedestrian routes and accessibility.
- Higher percentage mode share for transit, bicycling and walking
- Safer roads

The N.C. Department of Transportation adopted a "Complete Streets" policy in July 2009. The policy directs the Department to consider and incorporate several modes of transportation when building new projects or making improvements to existing infrastructure. The benefits of this new approach include:

- Making it easier for travelers to get where they need to go;
- Encouraging the use of alternative forms of transportation;
- Building more sustainable communities;

- Increasing connectivity between neighborhoods, streets, and transit systems;
- Improving safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists.

The Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Growth Management Plan, Principle 4: Transportation Options, provides guidelines to Planning Staff, Planning Board and Town Council when it states that;

Transportation must be safe, convenient, and interesting. These performance factors affect sidewalk and street design, placement of parking, and location of building fronts, doors, and windows. Well-designed bike lanes and sidewalks protect people from vehicle accidents. Orienting windows and doorways to the sidewalk increases awareness of street activity and the safety of the streetscape. Convenience begins with a connected network of streets that provides alternative routes with reasonable walking distances between destinations. A properly designed network also promotes neighborhood safety by routing the heaviest traffic around neighborhoods, without sacrificing street connectivity. Providing compact, mixed-use development connected by safe, convenient, and interesting networks of streets and paths promotes:

- walking, cycling, and transit as viable, attractive alternatives to driving;
- less traffic congestion and air pollution;
- the convenience, density, and variety of uses necessary to support transit;
- a variety of alternative routes, thereby dispersing traffic congestion; and
- lower traffic speeds, making neighborhoods safe

The Town of Smithfield Unified Development Ordinance adopted August 2, 2017, implements the objects of the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan through carefully thought out connectivity requirements.

10.109 STREET CONNECTIVITY REQUIREMENTS.

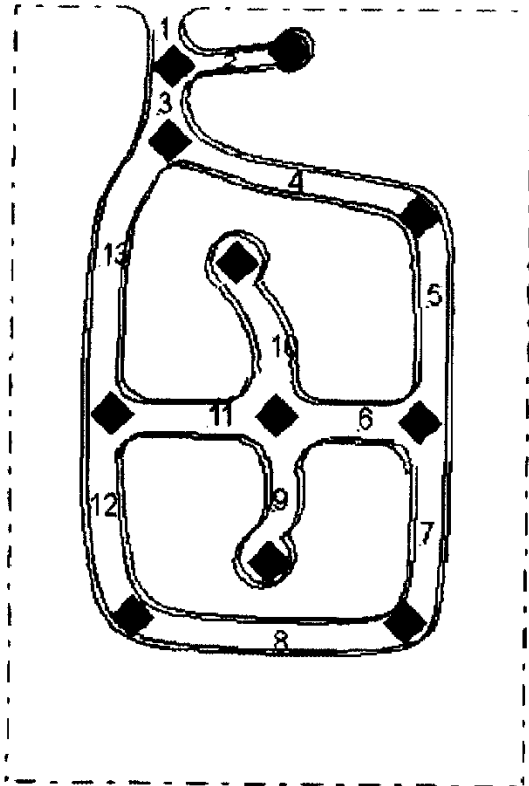
10.109.1. An interconnected street system is necessary in order to protect the public health, safety, and welfare in order to ensure that streets will function in an interdependent manner, to provide adequate access for emergency and service vehicles, to enhance non-vehicular travel such as pedestrians and bicycles, and to provide continuous and comprehensible traffic routes. All proposed new streets shall be platted according to the current Town Thoroughfare Plan. In areas where such plans have not been completed, the streets shall be designated and located in relation to existing and proposed streets, the topography, to natural features such as streams and tree cover, to public safety and convenience, and to the proposed use of land to be served by such streets.

10.109.2. All proposed streets shall be continuous and connect to existing or platted streets without offset with the exception of cul-de-sacs as permitted and except as provided below.

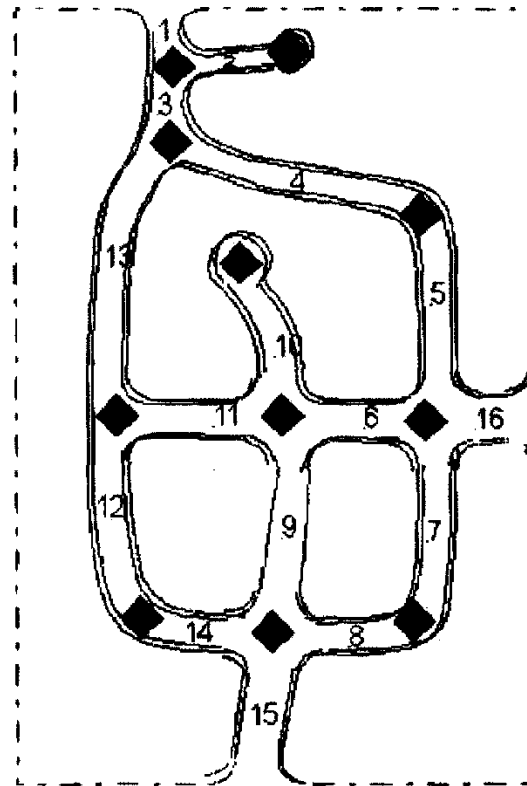
Whenever practicable, provisions shall be made for the continuation of planned streets into adjoining areas.

10.109.3. The street network for any subdivision shall achieve a connectivity ratio of not less than 1.45 (see example below).

Example 1: Subdivision that does not meet the Ratio
(13 links/11 nodes = 1.18 ratio)



Example 2: Same development modified to meet Ratio
(16 links/11 nodes = 1.45 ratio)



10.109.4. For the purposes of this section, the street links and nodes within the collector or thoroughfare streets providing access to a proposed subdivision shall not be considered in computing the connectivity ratio.

10.109.5. Residential streets shall be designed so as to minimize the length of local streets, to provide safe access to residences, and to maintain connectivity between and through residential neighborhoods for autos and pedestrians.

10.109.6. Where necessary to provide access or to permit the reasonable future subdivision of adjacent land, rights-of-way, and improvements shall be extended to the boundary of the development. A temporary turnaround may be required where the dead end exceeds 500 feet in length. The platting of partial width rights-of-way shall be prohibited except where the remainder of the necessary right-of-way has already been platted, dedicated, or established by other means.

The American Planning Association has compiled a list of communities across America that adopted intersection spacing and cul-de-sac standards.

**TABLE 3-1
SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERSECTION SPACING
AND CUL-DE-SACS**

	Max Intersection Spacing for Local Streets (feet)	Max Intersection Spacing for Arterials	Are Street Stubs Required?	Are Cul-de-Sacs Allowed?	Max Cul-de-Sac Length (feet)
<i>Block-Length (by city)</i>					
Metro, Oregon	530	530	No	No (with exceptions)	200
Portland, Oregon	530	530	Yes	No (with exceptions)	200
Beaverton, Oregon	530	1,000	Yes	No (with exceptions)	200
Eugene, Oregon	600	None	Yes	No (with exceptions)	400
Fort Collins, Colorado	See Note 1	660–1,320 ²	Yes	Limited	660
Boulder, Colorado	See Note 3	None	Yes	Yes, discouraged	600
Huntersville, North Carolina	250–500	No data	Yes	No (with exceptions)	350
Cornelius, North Carolina	200–1,320	See note 4	Yes	No (with exceptions)	250
Conover, North Carolina	400–1,200	No data	Yes	Yes	500
Raleigh, North Carolina	1,500 ⁵	No data	Yes	Yes	400–800 ⁶
<i>Connectivity Index (by city)</i>					
Cary, North Carolina	Index = 1.2	1,250–1,500	Yes	Yes	900
Middletown, Delaware	Index = 1.4	None	Yes	Yes, discouraged	1,000
Orlando, Florida ⁷	Index = 1.4	None	Yes	Yes	700 (30 units)

Notes:

- (1) Maximum block size is 7 to 12 acres, depending on zoning district.
- (2) Limited movement intersections required every 660 feet; full movement intersections required every 1,320 feet.
- (3) Not specified by code, but staff tries to achieve 300 to 350 foot spacing.
- (4) Intersection spacings on arterials is regulated by the state Department of Transportation.
- (5) Within a Mixed-Use Center, no street block face shall exceed 660 feet in length.
- (6) 400 feet in residential areas, 800 feet in commercial areas; Transportation Director may approve up to 10% longer.
- (7) Requirements in place for Southeast Sector and under consideration for rest of city.

The American Planning Association has compiled a list of communities across America that have additional requirements related to street connectivity

**TABLE 3-2
SUMMARY OF OTHER REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO
STREET CONNECTIVITY¹**

	Max Spacing Between Bike/Ped Connections (feet)	Local Street Widths (Paved, in feet)	Are Private Streets Allowed?	Are Gated Streets Allowed?
<i>Block-Length (by city)</i>				
Metro, Oregon	330	<28 encouraged	See Note 2	See Note 2
Portland, Oregon	330	See Note 3	Limited	No
Beaverton, Oregon	330	20–34	Limited	No
Eugene, Oregon	See Note 4	20–34	Limited	Limited
Fort Collins, Colorado	700	24–36	Limited	No
Boulder, Colorado	See Note 5	24–36	No	No
Huntersville, North Carolina	None	18–26	No	No
Cornelius, North Carolina	None	18–26	Yes	No
Conover, North Carolina	None	22	No	No
Raleigh, North Carolina	None	26	Limited	Discouraged
<i>Connectivity Index (by city)</i>				
Cary, North Carolina	If Index waived	27	Yes	No
Middletown, Delaware	No data	24–32	No	No
Orlando, Florida ⁶	None	24 minimum	Yes	No

Notes:

- (1) Traffic calming incorporated into connectivity requirements; city may have separate traffic calming program.
- (2) Not regulated.
- (3) Width must be sufficient to accommodate expected users.
- (4) No maximum distance, but each development must have a plan showing pedestrian connections to cul-de-sacs.
- (5) No requirements, but staff suggests spacing similar to local streets (300 to 350 feet).
- (6) Requirements in place for Southeast Sector and under consideration for rest of city.

Connectivity requirements can also be found in Smithfield, Clayton, Knightdale, Wendell, and Fuquay-Farina.

However, there are opponents to complete street and walkable communities and their arguments include increased cost to the developer, increased cost of housing, increased cost of maintenance, exclusive rights to public streets are restricted and limited policy options for the construction and maintenance of stub streets.

Benefits of walkable and connected communities are well documented.

According to AARP Livable Communities study,

- People who live in neighborhoods with sidewalks are 47 percent more likely to be active at least 39 minutes a day.
- A well-constructed walkway for a typical 50-foot-wide residential property might cost a builder \$2,000, but it can return 15 times that investment in resale value.
- In a scenario where two houses are nearly identical, the one with a five-foot-wide sidewalk and two street trees not only sells for \$4,000 to \$34,000 more but it also sells in less time.
- Retail properties with a [Walk Score](#) ranking of 80 out of 100 were valued 54 percent higher than properties with a Walk Score of 20 and had an increase in net operating income of 42 percent for more walkable properties.

Request: The Town of Smithfield Planning Board is requested to review the document and supporting information as it pertains to street connectivity and to provide direction on any needed changes in the Town plans or ordinances.

Sources:

The N.C. Department of Transportation, "Complete Streets" policy, Adopted July 2009
Town of Smithfield Unified Development Ordinance, Adopted August 2, 2017

Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Growth Management Plan, Adopted May 6, 2003

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Street Connectivity, Zoning and Subdivision Model
Ordinance

Smart Growth America, Improving Lives by Improving Communities

AARP Livable Communities study

American Planning Association, Planning for Street Connectivity, Getting From Here to There.

Further study material can be found at:

http://www.pedbikeinfo.org/pdf/PlanDesign_SamplePlans_CS_NCDOT2012.pdf

<https://smartgrowthamerica.org/program/national-complete-streets-coalition/what-are-complete-streets/>

<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/info-2014/sidewalks-fact-sheet.html>



Town of Smithfield
Planning Department
350 E. Market St Smithfield, NC 27577
P.O. Box 761, Smithfield, NC 27577
Phone: 919-934-2116
Fax: 919-934-1134

Permit Issued for February 2018

				Permit Fees	Permits Issued
Site Plan	Major Site Plan			150.00	1
Site Plan	Minor Site Plan			\$200.00	2
Zoning	Land Use			\$1,150.00	13
Zoning	Sign			\$100.00	2
Report Period Total:				\$1,600.00	18
Fiscal YTD Total:				\$11,100.00	158
Z18-000018	Zoning	Land Use	Residential driveway		29 Fox Chase Lane
Z18-000017	Zoning	Land Use	Firehouse Subs Restaurant		515 Outlet Center Drive
Z18-000019	Zoning	Land Use	Keystone Novelties Distributors		1273 North Brightleaf Blvd
Z18-000020	Zoning	Sign	Keystone Novelties Fireworks Sales		1273 North Brightleaf Blvd
Z18-000021	Zoning	Land Use	Verizon Wireless		1053 Outlet Center Drive
SP18-000002	Site Plan	Minor Site Plan	Auto Sales Repair and Storage		1195 Brogden Road
SP15-000007	Site Plan	Major Site Plan	Tunnel Car Wash		1203 North Brightleaf Blvd
SP18-000004	Site Plan	Minor Site Plan	Air Compressor Shelter.		3250 US 70 Bus Hwy W.
Z18-000023	Zoning	Land Use	Wash and Wash Laundromat		1302 & 1304 S. Brightleaf Blvd
Z18-000024	Zoning	Land Use	Mobile Home Replacement		201 Everett Lane
Z18-000025	Zoning	Land Use	CTH Rentals, LLC		101 NC 210 Highway
Z18-000026	Zoning	Land Use	Carolina Lease Management Group		101 NC Hwy 210
Z18-000028	Zoning	Land Use	Skechers		1025 Outlet Center Drive
Z18-000027	Zoning	Land Use	Johnston-Lee Harnett Comm Action		1102 Massey Street
Z18-000029	Zoning	Land Use	West CalvaryChurch / HC Ramp		402 McCullers Street
Z18-000030	Zoning	Land Use	Salon 29:11 LLC		226 Venture Drive
Z18-000031	Zoning	Sign	Dollar General #3865		429 West Market Street
Z18-000032	Zoning	Land Use	Dollar General #3865		429 West Market Street



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BOARD ACTIONS REPORT - 2018

	February	Calendar Year to date
Town Council		
Zoning Map Ammendments	0	0
Special Use Permit	1	2
Zoning Ordinance Amendments	1	2
Major Subdivisions	0	0
Annexations	0	0
Special Events	1	1
Site Plan	0	0
Planning Board		
Zoning Map Amendments	4	4
Zoning Ordinance Ammendments	2	3
Major Subdivisions	0	0
Board of Adjustment		
Variance	0	0
Admin Appeal	0	0
Historic Properties Commission		
Certificate of Appropriateness	0	0
Historic Landmarks	0	0