

**Town of Smithfield
Planning Board Minutes
Thursday, July 10th, 2025
Council Chambers
6:00 PM**

Members Present:

Chairman Mark Lane
Vice-Chairman Debbie Howard
Doris Wallace
Ashley Spain
Alisa Bizzell
Bryan Stanley

Members Absent:

Wiley Narron

Staff Present:

Micah Woodard, Planner I
Julie Edmonds, Administrative Support Specialist

Staff Absent:

Stephen Wensman, Planning Director

CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IDENTIFY VOTING MEMBERS

APPROVAL OF AGENDA Debbie Howard made a motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Doris Wallace. Unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES May 1st, 2025

Doris Wallace made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Bryan Stanley. Unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

ZA-25-02 B-3 Maximum Building Height Text Amendment: Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) text amendment request by Brown Investment Properties, Inc to amend UDO Article 8, Section 8.91. to increase the maximum height in the B-3 Highway Entranceway Business District from forty feet (40') to fifty (50').

Planner Micah Woodard stated Brown Investment Properties, Inc. has requested to amend the Unified Development Ordinance Article 8, Section 8.91 to increase the maximum height in the B-3 Highway Entranceway Business District from 40 feet to 50 feet. He pointed out the maximum height in the B-3 Highway Entranceway Business District is currently 40 feet. The definition of building height in the UDO is: The vertical distance from the average finished grade (prior to the addition of any fill) of the building lot to the highest point of the building. The average grade will be based on the condition of the lot prior to the date of adoption of this ordinance.

The applicant received a special use permit for Stadler Station Apartments and found the existing maximum height regulation to be too restrictive for their project. The applicant is planning to utilize fill soil to raise the site and plans on utilizing a 4:12 or 5:12 pitched roof for the apartment buildings which will result in a building height that exceeds current town standards. Without the increase in building height, the planned three-story apartment would not be feasible. The Town's definition of building height differs from the 2018 NC State Building Code's definition; rather than measuring to the peak of the roof, NC State Building Code measures to the midpoint of the roof. The town's definition is consistent with those of several other towns in Johnston County.

Staff finds the zoning text amendment consistent with the Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Growth Management Plan and other adopted plans, and that the amendment is reasonable and, in the public interest. Planning Staff recommends the Planning Board recommend approval of the zoning text amendment

ZA-25-02, with a statement declaring the request consistent with the Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Growth Management Plan and that the request is reasonable and, in the public, interest.

Debbie Howard asked if the property was already within 660 ft of Interstate 95?

Micah Woodard said no I don't believe so.

Mark Lane asked if the board was amending the UDO (Unified Development Ordinance)?

Micah Woodard said you're recommending the Town Council amend the UDO.

Mark Lane asked what consists of B-3 Highway Entranceway Business District?

Micah Woodard said any parcel in the B-3 zoning district.

Mark Lane said we're looking to change the UDO for all of B-3 zoning district for just one project?

Micah Woodard answered correct.

Mark Lane doesn't like amending the UDO for one project.

Ashley Spain asked why the applicant didn't apply for a conditional zoning?

Micah Woodard stated we are past the point of time where a conditional zoning would be necessary. The project was already approved in 2024. He stated another option could be a variance but this was the option that was pursued.

James Todd came forward, he's the attorney for the applicant Brown Investment Properties, Inc. They're requesting this change to the UDO so the applicant can build pitched roof three story apartments instead of three stories with a flat roof. It would cost over a million dollars more to build a flat roof. He feels it's a better fit for the B-3 district because it allows you to offer a more affordable multi-family product.

Matt Ansley of ISG Architects came forward to speak. He's the architect over this project. He stated due to the nature of the site they needed to raise the grade by 3 feet. That only leaves 37 ft to the peak of the roof. For a three-story project this presents a challenge. When doing multi-family there are quite a bit of infrastructure costs so a third story helps spread those infrastructure investments across more units and make the project financially more viable.

Mark Lane asked why they didn't go to the Board of Adjustments instead of trying to change the UDO?

James Todd said after speaking with staff, they felt this was a change the Town's Comprehensive Plan predicted.

Debbie Howard made a motion to amend Article 8, Section 8.9.1 of the Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Growth Management Plan to allow maximum height in the B-3 Highway Entranceway Business District from 40 feet to 50 feet, but not to exceed 3 stories and it will require a 4/12 and 5/12 roof pitch only applied to multi-family; seconded by Doris Wallace. Ashley Spain voted no, Bryan Howard voted no, Mark Lane voted no and Alisa Bizzell voted no. 2 in favor, 4 against.

RZ-25-01 Clarius Industrial Park: Clarius Partners, LLC is requesting a general rezoning of 75.61-acre tract located on US Highway 70 Business W, at the north edge of the Town's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) identified by Johnston County Tax ID 17J07032 from the existing B-3 (Highway Business) / R-20A (Residential Agricultural) Zoning Districts to LI (Light Industrial).

Micah Woodard stated the applicant Clarius Partners, LLC is requesting a zoning map amendment to rezone a 75.61-acre parcel, located on US Highway 70 Business W, at the north edge of the Town's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) and with the Johnston County Tax ID 17J07032, from R-20A (Residential-Agriculture) to LI (Light Industrial). The Town is unable to annex land in this area without cooperation of Wilsons Mills and they have

adjacency. Johnston County has sewer and water in the area if utilities are available for connection. There is a single 67-acre agricultural property to the south that separates the proposed industrial site from TK Studio, Advance Tec within an existing light industrial zoning district. The applicant has submitted a concept plan for Clarius Park, a warehouse distribution development that they hope to build on the site. The developers have already completed a traffic impact study and NCDOT has agreed to allow them a full movement driveway with a traffic signal that allows left and right turns into the site and turn lanes on the highway.

Planning Staff recommends approval of RZ-25-01 with a statement declaring the request consistent with the Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Growth Management Plan as amended by the rezoning, and other adopted plans, and that the amendment is reasonable and in the public interest.

Ashley Spain asked how the blue line stream crossing the northern portion of the property would be addressed.

Craig Dannegger of Clarius Partners, LLC spoke on behalf of this project. He said they aren't overlaid on the blue line stream. He stated they would need to cross the blue line stream in a location.

Matt Gross a Project Manager of Kimley-Horn came forward. He stated they would be staying out of the 50-foot buffer to preserve it. They will apply for appropriate permits when the time comes.

Doris Wallace made a motion to recommend approval of zoning map amendment, RZ-25-01, finding it consistent with the Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Growth Management Plan as amended by the rezoning and other adopted plans, and that the amendment is reasonable and in the public interest; seconded by Debbie Howard. Unanimously approved.

CZ-25-03 Mallard Crossing

Mallard Smithfield NC, LLC is requesting approval of an amended R-8 conditional rezoning master plan of 491.2 acres of land which will include 1,327 residential units: 873 single-family detached, 454 single-family attached (townhomes).

Micah Woodard stated On June 7, 2022, the Town Council approved an R-8 Conditional rezoning for the Woodleaf Development which consisted of 2,005 residential units: 490 detached single-family lots, 691 attached single-family townhome lots, a 564-unit 3-story multifamily development and a 260-unit 4-story multifamily development.

Chairman Mark Lane paused the meeting to ask Planning Board member Ashley Spain if he owned any adjoining land to this tract on Mallard Rd. Ashley Spain said he hadn't received a notice in the mail but he must own adjoining property since his name was on the list of adjoining property owners. Mark Lane asked if Mr. Spain needed to recuse himself?

Micah Woodard said he didn't see the need for Mr. Spain to recuse himself.

Micah Woodard stated a new developer is requesting an amendment to the masterplan with the following changes:

- Reduction in the acreage because the solar farm has been removed from the development site.
- A reduction in the number of residential units from 2,005 to 1,327
- Eliminated all 824 apartment units from the plan
- Introducing age-targeted units
- A total of 5 distinct residential product lines.
- Plans include 2 clubhouses and swimming pools
- Electric by the Town of Smithfield
- Architectural materials include premium vinyl siding.
- Proposing valley curb in front of all lots that are less than 50' wide
- There will be overflow parking in the townhouse areas, but not within 500' of each building as was approved with Woodleaf.

Micah explained the master plan. He explained utilities would be with the Town of Smithfield. He stated a traffic impact study was prepared and NCDOT would require turn lanes on Mallard Rd. Micah continued explaining the amenities of the new development.

Planning staff recommends approval of CZ-25-03 with the following conditions:

1. That the trash and recycling roll-off containers in the single family and townhouses units be screened from the public right-of-way or stored within a garage or the rear yards and enforced by the HOA.
2. That the landscape plan be provided meeting minimum requirements of the UDO Part III and include:
 - a. A 3' average height - landscaped berm with decorative fence be provided between Mallard Road and rear property lines where there are double fronted lots.
3. The HOA declarations be submitted for review by the Town Attorney with the preliminary plat.
4. That an HOA be responsible for the ownership and maintenance of all common amenities including landscaping and property maintenance for the entire development, the stormwater SCM, parking lots, recreational amenities, and open space, parking enforcement and trash and recycling roll-off storage/screening.
5. That architectural standards be drafted and included in the HOA declarations to include: A variation in exterior finishes, including cottage style elements including a mix of premium vinyl siding styles, including horizontal lap siding, shake shingle accent siding and board and batten style siding. Each of the products will also have garages, with each garage door having either carriage style adornments or windows. The age-targeted product lines will also include stone elements on the exterior.
6. That all single-family homes and townhomes have rear decks or patios of at least 100 sq ft. in size.

Paul Luck, the developer on this project gave an overview of the history of the property when it was brought before the Town as Woodleaf. They have decided to scrap the original plan and start over. Mallard Crossing will have 700 units less than Woodleaf. They removed 824 apartments; he stated this site wasn't meant for apartments. They have collaborated with Ryan Homes, the builder for this project. They've set this development up so you have an age targeted area and traditional conventional on the other side. Each area will have its own amenities.

Doris Wallace made a motion to recommend approval of the zoning map amendment, CZ-25-03, with 7 conditions of approval, finding the rezoning consistent with the Town of Smithfield Comprehensive Growth Management Plan and other adopted plans, and that the amendment is reasonable and in the public interest; seconded by Ashley Spain. Unanimously approved.

Old Business

None

Adjournment

Debbie Howard made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Ashley Spain. Unanimously approved.

Next Planning Board meeting is August 7th, 2025, at 6pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Julie Edmonds
Administrative Support Specialist