



Town Council
Meeting Minutes - Draft
January 07, 2026, 6:00 PM
Library, Meeting Room B

For interpretation or translation services, call 919-969-5105.

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WELCOME to a COUNCIL MEETING!

We're glad you're here. Want to know more about the meeting logistics, see <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/at-the-council-meeting>

ROLL CALL

Present: 9 - Mayor Jessica Anderson, Mayor pro tem Camille Berry, Council Member Wesley McMahon, Council Member Melissa McCullough, Council Member Paris Miller-Foushee, Council Member Theodore Nollert, Council Member Louie Rivers, Council Member Amy Ryan, and Council Member Elizabeth Sharp

OTHER ATTENDEES

Town Manager Theodore Voorhees, Deputy Town Manager Mary Jane Nirdlinger, Interim Town Attorney James Baker, Executive Director of Strategic Communications and Marketing Susan Brown, Planning Director Britany Waddell, Long-Range Planning Manager Tas Lagoo, Chief of Staff Jeanne Brown, Patrol Captain Johnnie Britt, Assistant Town Clerk Brenton Hodge, and Town Clerk Brittney Hunt.

OPENING

Mayor Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

1. General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6) [26-0007]

A motion was made by Mayor pro tem Berry, seconded by Council Member Nollert, that the Council entered into closed session as authorized by General Statute Sections 143-318.11(a)(6) and 143-318.11(a)(3). The motion carried by a unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Mayor pro tem Berry, seconded by Council

Member Ryan that the Council adjourn closed session at 6:28 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mayor Anderson made an announcement regarding the next Council Regular Meeting scheduled for January 21, 2026 at 6 p.m., the Town's transition to chapelhillnc.gov, and the importance of public engagement, encouraging community members to provide input on upcoming topics.

AGENDA ITEM(S)

2. Land Use Management Ordinance Council Discussion [26-0008]

Council discussed proposed updates to the Town's Land Use Management Ordinance (LUMO), focusing on an omnibus text amendment scheduled for a formal vote on January 21, 2026. The discussion built on previous work from the November 19, 2025 meeting and was guided by the Town's Complete Community Strategy and recent housing studies. Mayor Anderson noted the goal of the discussion was for Council to provide clear policy direction to staff in preparation for the upcoming vote and would highlight the following elements of the LUMO: Site Plan Review, Concept Plan Review, Conditional Zoning process, two-family housing options, and parking regulations.

Council members began with a review of the staff's recommendations to streamline the site plan review process. Council generally agreed that removing Planning Commission site plan review for most development projects would reduce unnecessary barriers and improve efficiency. Council also supported treating all site plan reviews consistently, including those required by Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) rules, recognizing that this approach would modernize the process while maintaining essential neighborhood protections.

Following site plan review, Council discussed the concept plan review process, highlighting whether to eliminate the requirement entirely or make it voluntary. Some Council members valued concept plan review as a tool for early feedback and public engagement, while others viewed it as a potential barrier, especially for small-scale or incremental development. Concerns were raised about the risk of a voluntary process becoming "de facto" mandatory, and whether eliminating the requirement might reduce opportunities for community input. Staff clarified that transparency and public access to development proposals would remain priorities, even if the formal review process was streamlined. Council members noted the elimination of mandatory concept plan review, with the understanding that the impact of this change would be evaluated and revisited, if necessary.

The discussion then shifted to the conditional zoning process. Council members supported consolidating the Town's three existing conditional zoning processes, favoring the expedited "Community Priority Process for Affordable Housing" as the new standard. They noted that this process

had proven effective for affordable housing projects, though less so for mixed-income developments. Council noted that consolidation would improve predictability and efficiency for applicants. Council proposed an amendment to require above-ground stormwater management areas to be shown on district-specific plans.

Council members expressed a range of views regarding the appropriate maximum size for two-family housing options, including duplexes, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and cottages. Some advocated for a cautious approach, suggesting a limit of 3,600 square feet, while others supported the staff's recommendation of 5,000 square feet. Discussions in favor of larger units included increased flexibility for families, multi-generational living arrangements, and the realities of Chapel Hill's expensive housing market. Those favoring smaller units emphasized affordability, the need for missing middle housing, and concerns about incentivizing large, expensive homes or student staffers. Council also discussed the potential for future amendments to allow triplexes and quadplexes, recognizing that a broader range of housing types would better address affordability and community needs.

Council considered parking regulations including whether to maintain the four-vehicle parking maximum for duplexes or eliminate it altogether. Some Council members stated that maintaining the maximum would support climate goals, reduce impervious surfaces, and encourage walkability and transit use. Others pointed out that families and multi-generational households often require more parking, and that eliminating the maximum would remove barriers to infill development. Staff clarified that the four-vehicle maximum applied specifically to outdoor parking spaces, and that environmental standards such as tree canopy and impervious surface limits would still apply.

Council also addressed proposed changes to subdivisions and lot layout standards. Council members supported procedural improvements that would make Town staff responsible for all subdivision approvals, reduce minimum lot sizes and related dimensions, and allow zero-frontage lots and flag lots. Council highlighted the potential for more flexible lot layouts to support diverse housing types and incremental growth, while balancing development with neighborhood character and infrastructure capacity. Staff provided examples illustrating how reduced lot sizes and new lot types could enable more housing options without sacrificing quality or safety.

Council further discussed manufactured home communities and sign regulations. Council members agreed that protecting existing manufactured home parks was important for housing stability and affordability. They also supported updates to sign regulations, which would reflect current practices and allow greater flexibility in residential districts.

Council considered miscellaneous updates, such as allowing multiple permitted uses on the same property and enabling shared driveways.

Council asked staff to prepare alternate language for amendments where consensus had been reached and requested that future work sessions continue to focus on priority issues and consensus-building.

This matter was received and filed.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:31 p.m.