



TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

Town Council

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Town Hall
405 Martin Luther King Jr.
Boulevard
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Mayor Jessica Anderson
Mayor pro tem Amy Ryan
Council Member Camille Berry
Council Member Melissa McCullough
Council Member Paris Miller-Foushee

Council Member Theodore Nollert
Council Member Adam Searing
Council Member Elizabeth Sharp
Council Member Karen Stegman

Wednesday, May 28, 2025 6:00 PM Library, Meeting Room A

Language Access Statement

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

ဘာသာပြန်ဆိုခြင်းနှင့် စကားပြန်ခြင်းအတွက်၊ (၉၁၉) ၉၆၉-၅၁၀၅ ကို ဖုန်းခေါ်ပါ။

Para servicios de interpretación o traducción, llame al 919-969-5105.

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如需口头或
书面翻译服
务，请拨打
919-969-5105.

In-Person Meeting Notification

Town Council holds informal Work Sessions where Town Council discusses departmental agenda items and receives presentations.

View the Meeting

- Public attendance is welcome, and limited to room capacity
- We will not live stream the event, and there is no public comment period
- Post-Meeting Video at <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/councilvideo/>
- The Town of Chapel Hill wants to know more about who participates in its programs and processes, including Town Council meetings.
- Participate in a voluntary demographic survey before viewing online or in person - <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/demosurvey>

Parking and Entry

- Parking is available at the Library lots. The Library is served by CL Route, D Route, and GoTriangle Routes of Chapel Hill Transit
- Meeting Room A is to the left from the main entrance.
- Please do not bring signs.

ROLL CALL

Present: 9 - Mayor Jessica Anderson, Mayor pro tem Amy Ryan, Council Member Camille Berry, Council Member Paris Miller-Foushee, Council Member Adam Searing, Council Member Karen Stegman, Council Member Theodore Nollert, Council Member Melissa McCullough, and Council Member Elizabeth Sharp

OTHER ATTENDEES

Interim Town Manager Mary Jane Nirdlinger, Deputy Town Manager Loryn Clark, Assistant Town Attorney James Baker, Executive Director for Strategic Communications and Marketing Susan Brown, Planning Director Britany Waddell, Principal Planner Tas Lagoo, Manager's Office Intern Josie Zakrzewski, Police Officer Todd Harris, and Town Clerk Brittney Hunt.

OPENING

Mayor Jessica Anderson called the Work Session to order at 6:00 p.m. Council Member Berry arrived at 6:05 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBERS

AGENDA ITEM(S)

1. Rewriting Our Rules - A Land Use Management Ordinance (LUMO) Update [\[25-0263\]](#)

Principal Planner Tas Lagoo reported that the process of rewriting the Land Use Management Ordinance (LUMO) had fallen behind schedule due to a consultant's draft not meeting Town standards, and staff has hired a new consultant who is currently working on the rewrite.

Planning Director Britany Waddell provided an update on the LUMO rewriting process, highlighting that the Town has historically taken a piecemeal approach to amending the ordinance, but staff is recommending a more systematic approach of continuous improvement including omnibus text amendments to allow for batch reviews and approvals. She suggested that text amendments should focus on high-priority topics and potential areas for text amendments would include reducing minimum lot sizes, streamlining the conditional zoning process, delegating administrative decisions to staff, and eliminating parking minimums.

Ms. Waddell sought feedback from Council on interest in pursuing LUMO text amendments in the fall, and priorities and interests.

Council members spoke in favor of fall text amendments and expressed interest in new innovations for housing, current ordinances hindrance on non-traditional housing types, expanding affordability, and emphasized the importance of preserving and protecting natural areas while

strengthening the Town's tree canopy ordinance.

Mr. Lagoo noted that the LUMO incorporated all Town plans and would include public input at every step in the process.

Mr. Lagoo presented information on Design Standards and discussed several tools staff is considering for incorporation into the LUMO. He highlighted build-to-zones, which bring buildings closer to the street, and provided examples from both suburban and urban settings, noting the associated trade-offs and variables.

Mr. Lagoo covered step-backs, explaining how they influence building massing and tax revenue, and showed examples ranging from severe to gradual step-backs. He emphasized the need to limit the impacts of parking garages, such as light and noise pollution, and presented design solutions to address these issues.

Mr. Lagoo pointed out that the Town's current buffer rules can make buildings feel disconnected from the community and proposed a shift toward more strategic tree placement to enhance engagement.

Council members generally supported the shift toward using street trees instead of buffers. Council commented on asking developers to be creative with shade in areas, developers presenting plans with and without buffers and trees, generous public space in build-to-zones, and suggestions regarding setbacks.

This matter was received and filed.

2. Update on the Natural Features Model

[\[25-0264\]](#)

Principal Planner Tas Lagoo introduced the concept of incorporating a new Natural Features Model (NFM) into Town planning decisions that would compile existing data on habitat, hydrology, and land use, aiding long-range planning, zoning tradeoffs, land acquisition, and community efforts to preserve natural features. He noted that some NFM data extends beyond Town boundaries but emphasized that Chapel Hill has historically avoided developing in its Rural Buffer and Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs).

Council members discussed the benefits of the NFM emphasizing the need for smart growth, reducing car dependency, and protecting wildlife and streams.

Council members highlighted the NFM's role in informing policy and setting standards, the importance of an equity lens in development conversations, alignment with the Town's Complete Community vision, and strengthening the Town's Rural Buffer agreement with Orange County to achieve significant environmental goals.

This matter was received and filed.

3. Discussion: Topics for June 4 Work Session

[\[25-0265\]](#)

Interim Town Manager Mary Jane Nirdlinger asked the Mayor and Council to specify the information they wanted to see at the June 4, 2025, Work Session on the Recommended FY 2026 Budget.

Mayor Anderson requested options to reduce the proposed 5.8 cent tax increase to 3.5 to 4 cents, plus 0.2 cents for Transit. She also asked for a five-year Capital Improvement Plan linked to Fund Balance projections, options for staff pay raises, a clearer understanding of the Town's Downtown investment, and more funding for the InterFaith Council.

Council members agreed to discuss whether they should take pay raises, and would send their comments and questions to Ms. Nirdlinger via email.

This matter was received and filed.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.