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# Planning and Zoning Commission

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## July 28, 2025, Planning and Zoning Commission Minutes

**Voting Board Members Present:** Steve Coleman, James Freeman, Noah Harbuck, Hal Clarke, and Martin Pennington.

**Voting Board Members Not Present:** Michael Brewster and Kathy Rowland

**Staff Present:** Dean Nelson, Rachel Floyd, and Brian Causey.

- I. **Call to Order:** Steve Coleman called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.
- II. **Approval of Agenda:** Noah Harbuck motioned for the agenda to be approved. James Freeman seconded this motion. The agenda was approved unanimously. (4-0)
- III. **Approval of Minutes:** Mr. Harbuck motioned to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Hal Clarke seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously approved. (4-0)
- IV. **Planning and Zoning:**

### **Swearing in new member – Martin Pennington.**

Mayor Eric Wilson administered Martin Pennington's Oath of Office for the position of Planning and Zoning Commission member.

### **Public Hearing to consider a petition for the amendment of the Zoning Ordinances of the City of Forsyth as it relates to data centers.**

Steve Coleman opened the hearing at 5:13 p.m. Community Development Director Dean Nelson presented the proposed amendments:

- 1) Amending Article 2: Definitions and Interpretations to include "Data Center" with its state definition.

- 2) Amending Table 10.1: Permitted and Conditional Use in Nonresidential Districts to include data center as a conditional use within the Institutional, Highway Business, and Agricultural Zoning Districts and a permitted use in the Manufacturing-Industrial Zoning District.
- 3) Amending the text within Article 15: Specific Provisions for Principal Nonresidential Buildings and Uses to add a subsection (15.6) regulating the design and construction of Data Centers.

Mr. Nelson then provided his staff recommendation that the amendments be approved.

No public comment was made in support of or opposition to the proposed amendment.

Mr. Clarke suggested adding an electric and water percentage cap.

Mr. Harbuck asked if all data centers would come before Planning and Zoning and City Council for Public Hearings. Mr. Nelson responded that in the zoning districts where Data Centers would be a Conditional Use, public hearings and Council Approval of the Conditional Use application would be required. Mr. Harbuck asked about which zoning district Data Centers would be permitted in. Mr. Nelson clarified that Data Centers are a permitted use by right in the Manufacturing-Industrial zoning district in the proposed Table 10.1 amendment and would not require a public hearing.

Mr. Coleman stated that he does not think a Data Center should be allowed anywhere within historic city limits (prior to H&H). Mr. Harbuck then asked if there is anything within a mile of the square that is zoned Manufacturing-Industrial. Mr. Nelson stated that the amendment could be passed with data centers as a Conditional Use instead of Permitted Use within the Manufacturing-Industrial Zoning District. Mr. Coleman stated he would be against a data center in the Industrial Park behind Chick-fil-a because the area could not accommodate the size of one.

Mr. Harbuck motioned to recommend approval with an amendment changing Data Centers within the Manufacturing-Industrial zoning district to a Conditional Use instead of a Permitted use. Mr. Freeman seconded the motion. Mr. Clarke stated he would like to add an amendment limiting water and electricity use, but Utilities Director Mike Batchelor stated it wasn't necessary. The motion carried (4-1 with Mr. Clarke opposed).

Mr. Coleman closed the public hearing at 5:27 p.m.

**Public Hearing to consider a petition by Rosa Evans, CGE/Serenity House of Hope, for a variance to allow for an Adult Day Care on parcel F18 037, which is zoned Residential Moderate Density (R-3).**

Steve Coleman opened the Public Hearing at 5:28 p.m. Dean Nelson explained the process and criteria for granting a variance in addition to offering background on the request, including the application and supporting documents, history of the property, surrounding zonings and uses, and the staff recommendation to deny the request as the Zoning Ordinance does not define “Adult Day Care Center” or include it within the Table of Uses, so it is not permitted by right.

Ms. Rosa Evans (applicant) spoke in support of the application. She explained that the current variance provides community living arrangements for individuals aged 18+ with disabilities. The requested variance would allow her to transition to an adult day care facility, with the hours of 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. She also stated that the State rules and regulations are the same for both types of facilities.

Ms. Kimberly Crawford-Davis spoke in opposition to the application on behalf of her mother who lives across the street from the applicant property. She stated that she and her mother opposed the initial variance granted but were unable to attend the hearings held at that time. She stated that institutions, like the one in question, greatly affect the neighborhood’s traffic, privacy, property values, and safety. Ms. Crawford-Davis further explained that the hill the property is located on poses a safety risk for those with mobility impairments or who are at risk of elopement.

Ms. Crawford-Davis also stated that granting the variance may set a precedence for other non-residential businesses to enter the Blount Hill community, and that many community members have signed a petition in opposition to the variance. Mr. Coleman recommended that all individuals signing the petition include their address and phone number and bring the petition to the City Council meeting.

In her response, Ms. Evans stated that she was surprised to have any opposition as she has been in this community for over 40 years and no one has ever made a complaint to her regarding her business. She also stated that the property is currently empty as she is in transition.

Mr. Coleman closed the public hearing at 5:49 p.m.

Mr. Clarke stated that he believes in the past, variances have been given out without due consideration of the written ordinances, and that each variance can set a precedent.

Mr. Harbuck asked if the state requires certain ADA requirements be met. Ms. Evans responded yes, and that the requirements for an adult day care center are the same as the requirements as a community living arrangement.

Mr. Clarke motioned to deny the variance. The motion lacked a second and failed.

Mr. Coleman motioned that the Planning and Zoning Commission recommend City Council approve the variance based on the history of the property and the slight change from the variance that has already been granted. Mr. Harbuck seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-1, with Mr. Clarke being the only opposed.

## **V. Design Reviews:**

### **ECG Training Center, Parcel 014 031P, Mahala Drive.**

Mr. Kip Oldham, representing the architectural firm for the ECG project, offered to answer any questions the Board may have.

Mr. Colman asked if ECG currently has a location in Forsyth. Mr. Oldham stated that they are currently sharing a training facility and have an outdoor training facility in Coweta County, so the Facility being built is to combine both outdoor training and soft skills.

Mr. Coleman clarified that the new facility will be in the southeast corner of the industrial park and asked about the training setup. Mr. Oldham explained how the training labs would be set up both outside and inside of the building.

Mr. Oldham pointed out where different construction materials would be utilized throughout the design.

Mr. Oldham stated that upkeep of the grounds is key to the safety of individuals training, and that security cameras would be installed as well.

Mr. Freeman motioned to approve the design, Mr. Harbuck seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. (5-0)

### **City of Forsyth Public Works and Utilities Building, Parcel F33 032, 483 Cabaniss Drive.**

Mr. Mike Batchelor presented the design for the building, explaining that it is a dual-purpose building with the left side being utilities offices and the right side being public works operations. The building will also have a paved parking lot accessible to the public.

Mr. Coleman asked about the cost to add brick for the entire front. Mr. Batchelor stated that it was not in the budget but pointed out that the building does have a wainscoting feature to give a more elevated look. Mr. Clarke also inquired about hardie board. Mr. Batchelor stated that the current contract is for a steel building.

Mr. Batchelor also stated that the other buildings on the property would be updated to fit with the new building, and that he hopes to resheet the garage building if the budget permits.

Mr. Batchelor stated that a black coated chain link fence with privacy slats will run around the property, and the shrubbery will be cut back.

Mr. Coleman stated that it's a major improvement over what is currently there.

Mr. Clarke motioned to approve the design. Mr. Freeman seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. (5-0)

#### **VI. Additional Business:**

##### **Craft Cottage Builders Update.**

Ryan Cirone represented Craft Cottage Builders.

Mr. Cirone provided background on the updates to the warehouse – the addition of 19,500 sqft on the back of the current 15,000 sqft building. The same materials and colors will be used as were used for the current building.

Mr. Coleman asked if the addition will affect parking. Mr. Cirone stated that no parking will be changed or eliminated.

##### **Thanking Martin Presley.**

Mr. Coleman recognized Mr. Martin Presley (not present) for his service and time spent on the Planning and Zoning Board.

#### **VII. Adjournment:** Mr. Coleman adjourned the meeting at 6:16 p.m.