



**Town of Beaufort, NC**

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**Board of Commissioners/Planning Board Joint Meeting  
4:00 PM Monday, August 25, 2025  
Train Depot, 614 Broad Street**

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**Call To Order**

Mayor Harker called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM

**Roll Call**

Mayor Harker called the roll.

Those present from the Board of Commissioners were:

Mayor Harker  
Mayor Pro Tem Cooper  
Commissioner Gillikin  
Commissioner LoPiccolo  
Commissioner Oliver  
Commissioner Spiegler

*None were absent.*

Those present from the Planning Board were:

Ryan Neve  
Tammy Hunsucker  
George Stanziale

*Those absent were:*

Becky Bowler  
Victor Fasolino  
Clark Patton  
Jeff Vreugdenhil

**Agenda Approval**

Commissioner Cooper made a motion to approve the agenda.

The motion carried unanimously.

## Presentations

### 1. UDO Coastal Resilience Overlay District Draft

Mayor Harker welcomed everyone in person and online, thanked the UDO Steering Committee, consultants, and the public for their engagement, and reminded residents of the UDO Panel Q&A scheduled for August 26 at 6:00 p.m. She shared that questions could be submitted in advance to Town Planner, Michelle Eitner.

Ms. Eitner welcomed Kelly Cousino, with White Smith Cousino as the lead presenter.

Ms. Cousino reviewed the draft Coastal Resilience Overlay District (CR-O), developed with staff and the UDO Steering Committee since March 2025. It was noted that the draft aligns with the Non-Intensification Zone (NIZ) guidance of the Town's Comprehensive and CAMA Land Use Plan.

#### **Key Points from the Presentation:**

**Subdistricts:** CR-NIZ (coterminous with FEMA AE/VE "100-year floodplain") and CR-M (coterminous with FEMA shaded X "500-year floodplain").

**Applicability:** Applies to new development and redevelopment exceeding 50% of replacement value.

**Uses:** CR-NIZ prohibits new critical facilities and new residential other than detached single-family homes; CR-M follows base zoning.

**Density:** CR-NIZ capped at 5 du/acre; Steering Committee also considered "bedrooms per acre."

#### **Impervious Surface Coverage:**

CR-NIZ: 30% (residential), 50% (nonresidential).

CR-M: 40% (residential), 60% (nonresidential).

Exemptions for H-BD, H-WBD, R-8A, and projects requiring NCDEQ stormwater permits.

Detached single-family homes guaranteed 2,500 sq. ft. minimum.

**Shoreline Standards:** 20-ft buffer on natural waterfronts; planting area provisions; existing hardened shorelines may remain/rebuilt ( $\leq 2$  ft shift).

**Low Impact Development (LID):** Required on larger projects subject to stormwater regulations.

**Incentives:** Stormwater retrofits for older developed lots; enhanced construction standards with cumulative incentives.

**Next Steps:** Planning Board review September 15; Board of Commissioners review October 27; additional outreach in September and October; Steering Committee reconvening mid-October.

Following the presentation, the Board of Commissioners and Planning Board members discussed the draft Coastal Resilience Overlay District in detail, asking specific questions about its applicability, standards, and potential impacts on development and redevelopment

Commissioner Spiegler asked if the overlay required homes to be 20 feet back from the water.

Ms. Eitner clarified that while the CR-O requires a 20-ft shoreline buffer, CAMA mandates a 30-ft buffer, which in practice governs setbacks in most cases.

Planning Board Member George Stanziale asked about townhomes in the NIZ under the 5 du/acre cap.

Planning Board Member Ryan Neve explained the Steering Committee's intent was to limit density and households in the most hazard-prone zones, since townhomes often cluster near the water. The overlay aims to minimize exposure by restricting new residential to detached single-family homes.

Commissioner Oliver praised the draft's clarity but urged tying references to sea level rise directly to NOAA projections for precision. He also recommended engaging builders or engineers to validate the costs and feasibility of incentive-based options, stressing that incentives must align with actual market costs.

Commissioner Oliver raised concerns about pending state legislation on downzoning, questioning whether to wait before adopting the overlay.

Town Attorney, Arey Grady, advised moving forward, noting state legislative changes were unlikely before 2026. He suggested the Town adopt its plan now and adjust later if required by law.

Commissioner Oliver also noted that residents often ask, "What is the NIZ?" He typically explains it as the 100-year floodplain. He recommended adopting this terminology in outreach and ordinance language to reduce confusion. Other members agreed that plain-language terms (100-year and 500-year floodplain) should be paired with CR-NIZ/CR-M acronyms.

Planning Board Member Tammy Hunsucker questioned the flexibility of allowing telecommunications towers in the NIZ.

Ms. Cousino explained towers would only be permitted if no feasible alternative exists and must meet federal standards but acknowledged the language could be clarified.

Board members also discussed existing schools, water plants, and other facilities, emphasizing that the ordinance must avoid creating undue hardship for existing critical facilities.

Commissioner LoPiccolo asked about the rationale for the 30% cap in CR-NIZ.

Ms. Cousino explained it reflects regional practice and local parcel analysis, balanced with the 2,500 sq. ft. allowance for single-family lots.

Commissioner LoPiccolo asked how fully paved lots, or existing businesses would be treated.

Consultants and staff agreed the draft should explicitly address whether credits for existing impervious areas apply.

Board members raised concerns about how homeowners and businesses could rebuild after damage.

Commissioner Oliver emphasized that business owners should not face undue hardship in rebuilding, and the draft should make clear how structures under the 50% threshold can be rebuilt without triggering stricter standards.

Commissioner Oliver noted new shoreline, buffer, and construction standards could increase inspection and code enforcement demands, and the Town should anticipate budgeting for this.

Commissioner Gillikin recommended creating a companion administrative manual or FAQ with worked scenarios to preserve legislative intent and ensure consistency over time.

Consultants agreed, noting such manuals are common and could be prepared alongside the UDO.

Commissioner Oliver asked whether the Urban Waterfront Redevelopment exemption in CAMA was reflected in the draft.

Ms. Cousino confirmed the functional effect was present but agreed it should be explicitly named for clarity and alignment across plans.

**Adjourn**

Mayor Harker thanked the boards, consultants, staff, and the community for their substantial work on the draft. She emphasized that input from both boards will shape revisions ahead of the Planning Board's September 15th review and the Board of Commissioners October 27th work session.

With no further business, Commissioner Cooper moved to adjourn at 5:10 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

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Sharon E. Harker, Mayor

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Elizabeth Lewis, Town Clerk