



## **Town of Beaufort, NC**

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### **Town of Beaufort UDO Steering Committee Meeting 10:00 AM Tuesday, July 22, 2025 - Train Depot, 614 Broad Street, Beaufort, NC 28516 Minutes**

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#### **Call to Order**

Planner Eitner called the meeting to order at 10:00am. Those in attendance were Paula Gillikin, Commissioner (UDO Steering Committee Member), Ryan Neve, Planning Board Chairman (UDO Steering Committee Member), Vic Fasolino, Planning Board Member (UDO Steering Committee Member), Kelly Cousino, White Smith Cousino (UDO Consultant), Caitlin Cameron, White Smith Cousino (UDO Consultant), Kyle Garner, Planning Director (Town Staff), Sam Bell, Town Engineer (Town Staff), and Michelle Eitner, Planner (Town Staff). There were several members of the public in the audience to observe the meeting.

#### **Minutes Approval**

1. UDO Steering Committee Draft Minutes 6.20.25

The UDO Steering Committee meeting minutes from June 20, 2025 were approved by consensus without any changes.

#### **Items for Discussion and Consideration**

1. Decision Points - Coastal Resilience Overlay District Preliminary Discussion Draft

Cousino began by reminding the committee that the draft Coastal Resilience Overlay District includes two subdistricts: the CRNIC (Coastal Resilience NIZ), which aligns with the zone identified in the CAMA plan determined by special flood hazard areas, and the CRM (Coastal Resilience Moderate hazard subdistrict), which is essentially the Shaded X floodplain area. Cousino reviewed the standards in the overlay district and indicated that committee input was needed on several decision points to finalize a revised draft for the August 4th virtual meeting and subsequent joint work session with Commissioners and Planning Board.

The committee discussed whether the overlay district standards should apply to both new development and redevelopment, or only to new development. Initially, some members supported applying the standards only to new development, citing concerns about creating hardships for property owners rebuilding after storm damage.

After extended discussion, the committee decided that Option 1 (applying standards to both new development and redevelopment) would be best, but with protection for single-family homes that are damaged. The consensus was to tie redevelopment exclusions to the existing nonconforming structure

provisions, which would allow property owners to rebuild single-family homes within their existing footprint after storm damage without triggering the new overlay requirements.

The committee confirmed that new development would include subdivisions, site plan approvals, rezonings, or complete demolition and rebuilding with a different use, while continuing an existing use in the same footprint would be considered redevelopment.

A map was presented showing unimproved parcels (completely vacant) and underimproved parcels (with less than 30% improvement value compared to land value) within the NIZ to help the committee understand development potential in the area.

The committee reviewed the proposed definition of "critical facilities" that would be prohibited from new construction in the NIZ subdistrict. They confirmed the list should include:

- Emergency service facilities
- Long-term care facilities
- Jails and detention centers
- Schools (preschool through high school)
- Emergency shelters
- Principal use telecommunication towers (with co-location on existing structures still permitted)
- Utility facilities including water supply, water treatment, and power substations

The committee agreed to explicitly exempt wastewater pump stations from the prohibition. There was also discussion of potentially exempting the airport from some overlay district requirements, but members wanted more information before making that decision.

The committee had a lengthy discussion about impervious surface limits in the overlay district. Based on analysis of existing parcels and comparison with other coastal communities, they decided on the following limits:

- For the NIZ subdistrict:
  - Residential: 30% maximum impervious surface
  - Nonresidential: 50% maximum impervious surface
- For the CRM subdistrict:
  - Residential: 40% maximum impervious surface
  - Nonresidential: 60% maximum impervious surface

For single-family residential in both districts, the committee agreed to allow the greater of the percentage or 2,500 square feet of impervious surface.

The committee decided to exempt the Historic Waterfront Business District and the Historic Business District from impervious surface limits, as well as the R8-A district due to its unique waterfront conditions. There was discussion but no consensus on exempting projects with state stormwater permits.

The committee discussed the proposed 20-foot shoreline buffer requirement and agreed to maintain this consistent width rather than varying it based on lot size or depth. They confirmed the buffer should be left natural or planted with salt-tolerant native species.

The committee agreed to exempt the following from shoreline buffer requirements:

- R8-A zoning district
- Historic Waterfront Business District
- Historic Business District
- Marinas (principal use)
- Marine research facilities (water-dependent portions)
- Airport facilities

The committee agreed with the current draft's provisions prohibiting impervious surfaces and walls in the buffer except for specific exceptions like pedestrian trails, water-dependent access points like walkways and boat ramps, erosion control structures, and utility line penetrations.

Cousino presented information on the cost of the proposed planting requirements (approximately \$5,500 per 100 linear feet) and the committee requested additions to the plant list including scientific names and information about which plants can tolerate occasional inundation.

Cousino provided information on Low Impact Development requirements in the overlay district, noting that developments subject to the town's stormwater ordinance would need to use at least two LID techniques to manage at least 50% of the site's peak flow. These techniques include bioretention swales and basins, level spreaders, permeable pavers, cisterns, pocket wetlands, and rooftop runoff mitigation.

The committee reviewed research on LID costs, noting that while upfront costs might be higher, there are often offsetting benefits like increased buildable area and comparable maintenance costs to conventional systems.

The committee discussed whether increased construction standards (like additional freeboard, impact-resistant openings, etc.) should be required in the NIZ or merely incentivized throughout the overlay district. They decided to make these standards optional throughout the overlay with incentives like increased impervious surface allowances and building height adjustments.

The committee began discussing utility infrastructure in the NIZ but decided to postpone the detailed conversation to the August 4th meeting when they would have more time and could review information about the costs and considerations for infrastructure in flood-prone areas.

The meeting concluded with a review of the upcoming schedule, including a Community Conversation that afternoon, the August 4th virtual meeting, and a joint work session with the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners on August 26th.

**Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned by consensus at about 1:05pm.

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\_\_\_\_\_ Committee Staff – Approved \_\_\_\_\_