



Town of Beaufort, NC

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Town of Beaufort Planning Board Regular Meeting 6:00 PM Monday, April 20th, 2026 - Train Depot, 614 Broad Street, Beaufort, NC 28516 Minutes

Call to Order

Acting Chair Stanziale called the April 20th, 2026 Planning Board meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call

The Secretary conducted the roll call for the meeting.

Members Present: George Stanziale, Vice-Chair; Tammy Hunsucker, Vic Fasolino, Jeff Vreugdenhil, Cameron White

Members Absent: Ryan Neve, Chair; Clark Patton

A quorum was declared with five members present.

Town Staff Present: Kyle Garner, Planning Director; Michelle Eitner, Town Planner, Brad Fockler, Code Enforcement Officer; Arey Grady, Town Attorney; Laurel Anderson, Board Secretary

Agenda Approval

The Chairman requested approval of the agenda and noted two modifications needed. Case 26-07 was pulled by the applicant and requested removal from the agenda. Acting Chair Stanziale also asked the Board to consider tabling the election of officers until the Chair returned.

Member Fasolino made the motion to approve the agenda as modified and Member White made the second. Acting Chair Stanziale took a vote that was unanimously approved.

Voting yea: Acting Chair Stanziale, Tammy Hunsucker, Vic Fasolino, Jeff Vreugdenhil, Cameron White

Election of Officers

This item was postponed to the next meeting as part of the agenda modification.

Minutes Approval

1. PB Draft Minutes 021626

Member Hunsucker made the motion to approve the minutes as presented and Member Fasolino made the second. Acting Chair Stanziale took a vote that was unanimously approved.

Voting yea: Acting Chair Stanziale, Tammy Hunsucker, Vic Fasolino, Jeff Vreugdenhil, Cameron White

Public Comment

Acting Chair Stanziale then asked if anyone would like to speak. There were no public comments.

New Business

1. Case #26-06 Special Use Permit – Minuteman Gas Station 110 Towns Drive

Mrs. Eitner presented the application to establish a gas station at 110 Towns Drive. She explained that the property is located at the northern corner of Towns Drive and Live Oak Street. The site is within the general business B-1 zoning district, which allows gas stations as special use.

Mrs. Eitner detailed the components of the proposed development: a retail store building including a fast-food restaurant with inside seating and drive-through with no outdoor seating proposed, fuel island canopy, and tunnel drive-through car wash. The restaurant and gas company tenants are not known at this time. The development would include 26 parking spaces, a single ingress and egress point, landscaping including a Type A buffer along the property line between the gas station and existing townhouse development, and a stormwater pond designed to meet state permit requirements due to the proximity to high quality waters.

The lighting plan showed the brightest areas directly under the fuel canopy, with lighting dissipating to about 0.5-foot candles at the property line and further darkening to 0.1-foot candles at the townhouse area. A building elevation of similar product from another community was provided as an example.

Board questions for Mrs. Eitner included any input from the public, technical review committee (TRC) review, the ingress/egress location and potential traffic light plans, fire marshal recommendations, underground fuel tank locations, and the vegetation buffer.

Developer Greg Stewart, applicant, then made his presentation and discussed the extensive TRC process, the amount of fill required, and the tank positioning design so fuel trucks would not block egress. He pointed out that there was public support for the gas station.

Seth Epperson PE, from Summit Design, explained the stormwater pond location and stated it was positioned in front because that is where natural drainage occurs and where the existing culvert discharge point is located. Moving it to the back would require more fill to achieve proper drainage.

Acting Chair Stanziale, identifying as a landscape architect, expressed concerns about maintenance and appearance of the stormwater pond, particularly the grass slope areas. There was extensive board discussion pertaining to maintenance requirements, pond fencing, street trees, residential buffer adequacy with the adjoining townhomes, and irrigation considerations for grass slopes, with some members expressing reluctance with proposed irrigation requirements.

Mr. Stewart emphasized budget implications of various enhancement requests, stating the project was already at budget limits due to fill and stormwater requirements. He requested the board provide a complete list of priorities for consideration rather than individual requests.

Member Vreugdenhil moved to recommend approval with recommendations that the applicant consider the black chain link vinyl-coated fence and utilize larger street trees where applicable along Live Oak Street.

Member Fasolino requested to amend the motion to recommend submittal of a maintenance plan for the stormwater basin. Member Vreugdenhil agreed to the amendment.

Member Hunsucker asked for the nearby townhomes to be addressed.

After discussion about residential buffer adequacy, the board reviewed the landscaping plan showing a Type A buffer with 15 large trees, 24 small trees, and a six-foot opaque wooden fence along the townhouse property line, plus existing vegetation preservation.

Member Fasolino made the second and Acting Chair Stanziale took a vote that was unanimously approved.

Voting yea: Acting Chair Stanziale, Tammy Hunsucker, Vic Fasolino, Jeff Vreugdenhil, Cameron White

2. Case 26-08 – Special Use Permit – Beaufort Bar Outdoor Operation at 410 Live Oak Street

Mrs. Eitner explained this was a request to continue the outdoor operation at Beaufort Bar, which was granted a Special Use Permit (SUP) last year with a condition that it sunset on July 14th, 2026. Owner Mike Thagard was applying for a new SUP to continue the outdoor operation.

The existing bar is located north of No Name Pizza within the B-1 zoning district and Live Oak Street Corridor overlay district. The SUP authorized in 2025 required a six-foot tall fence surrounding the outdoor area under the roof overhang. No further building improvements are proposed with this request.

Mrs. Eitner noted there had been only two noise complaints, which Chief of Police Burdette said were addressed immediately with no further issues.

Member Hunsucker asked about the one-year term, and Mrs. Eitner explained commissioners sometimes give trial periods when uncertain, with potential for permanent approval if things go well.

Owner Mike Thagard presented, thanking staff for their assistance through the process. He provided background on Beaufort Bar's journey, opening July 5th, 2024 as a cocktail bar. After establishing themselves, they pursued the outdoor space expansion, completing major construction in August-September 2025 with an approximately \$50,000 investment. He further highlighted the positive community impact, outdoor space improvements, noise control measures, and business expansion.

Mr. Thagard explained he would keep the fence natural wood and not paint it. Acting Chair Stanziale asked about potential planting in the asphalt strip between fence and sidewalk. Mr. Thagard explained his fence is on the property line according to survey, with the strip being in state right-of-way, making him unable to plant there without permission. He expressed willingness to add more planter boxes if the town or state approved, but worried they could move and be dangerous in the wind. When Acting Chair Stanziale suggested he plant shrubs in the DOT right-of-way Mr. Thagard again explained he did not own the area to be able to bust up the concrete or asphalt.

Member White asked about attaching planter boxes to the fence. Town Attorney Arey Grady advised against the members recommending anything in the NCDOT right-of-way without DOT permission, noting the town shouldn't suggest or request such actions.

Member Fasolino suggested a five-year term rather than an unlimited SUP to maintain enforcement ability for future issues. Mrs. Eitner clarified that special use permits can be revoked and noise ordinance enforcement continues regardless of the permit.

Member Vreugdenhil made the motion to approve as presented and Member Hunsucker made the second. Acting Chair Stanziale took a vote that was unanimously approved.

Voting yea: Acting Chair Stanziale, Tammy Hunsucker, Vic Fasolino, Jeff Vreugdenhil, Cameron White

3. Case 26-09 – 100 Cedar Street Rezoning B-1 to CS-MU

Member Fasolino requested recusal due to his construction company having sold the property to the applicant, citing potential conflict of interest.

Motion: *Member Vreugdenhil moved to excuse Member Fasolino from consideration of this matter due to potential conflict of interest. Member White seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

Mr. Garner presented the rezoning request from B-1 to Cedar Street Mixed Use (CSMU) for the single lot at 100 Cedar Street. The applicant is Beaufort TCS LLC. The existing use is commercial office on less than a quarter-acre.

Mr. Garner noted the land use plan specifically identifies this property as CSMU. The rezoning would not change the existing non-conforming status of the existing structure, which does not meet the 20-foot rear setback requirement, sitting very close to the property line. Mr. Garner provided a comparison chart showing zoning standards differences between B-1 and CSMU districts.

He explained that B-1 zoning allows many more uses while CSMU is more restrictive, focusing on pedestrian-oriented businesses like small offices, retail, and restaurants. The Cedar Street district also has additional design criteria for siding, windows, and signage. Mr. Garner showed vicinity and zoning maps, noting the property is currently zoned B-1 commercial but the future land use map identifies it as CSMU.

Ron Cullipher of The Cullipher Group, representing the applicant, stated that he was available for any questions but there were none for him.

Member Vreugdenhil made the motion to approve as presented based on the application and the fact that it is a more restrictive zoning category, slightly less dimensional requirements and that there is a non-conformance status that would be the same in either, and Member Hunsucker made the second. Acting Chair Stanziale took a vote that was unanimously approved.

Voting yea: Acting Chair Stanziale, Tammy Hunsucker, Vic Fasolino, Jeff Vreugdenhil, Cameron White

Motion: *Member Vreugdenhil moved to return Member Fasolino to the board. Member Hunsucker seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

Commission/Board Comments

Member Hunsucker commented on pedestrian safety concerns at the intersection of Live Oak and Cedar Streets, noting dangerous conditions for families trying to cross to businesses. She suggested considering pedestrian traffic signals, though acknowledging it might be a NCDOT or town matter.

Mrs. Eitner confirmed it is identified as a NCDOT project but not yet funded. The town could approach NCDOT about interim adjustments.

Acting Chair Stanziale advocated for reducing the speed limit on Cedar Street from 35 mph to 25 mph, noting safety concerns when using his golf cart on the street.

Member Fasolino complimented staff for thorough and complete applications, stating the board can feel confident applications are well-reviewed before reaching them.

Staff Comments

Mr. Garner mentioned upcoming training opportunities for newer board members and informed the board that there would be a meeting in May.

Adjourn

Member Fasolino made the motion to adjourn and Member White made the second. Vice-Chair Stanziale took a vote that

was unanimously approved.

Voting yea: Acting Chair Stanziale, Tammy Hunsucker, Vic Fasolino, Jeff Vreugdenhil, Cameron White

Acting Chair Stanziale then declared the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

George Stanziale, Acting Chair

Laurel Anderson, Board Secretary

