



Town of Beaufort, NC

701 Front St. - P.O. Box 390 - Beaufort, N.C. 28516
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Town of Beaufort UDO Steering Committee Meeting 10:00 AM Wednesday, April 16, 2025 - Virtual via Zoom

Call to Order

Minutes Approval

UDO Steering Committee Draft Minutes 3.10.25

Items for Discussion and Consideration

1. Revised Draft UDO Vision, Principles, & Goals
2. Additional Information – Resilience Point Systems

Adjourn



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Town of Beaufort UDO Steering Committee Meeting 10:00 AM Monday, March 10, 2025 - Town Hall Conference Room Minutes

Call to Order

Planner Eitner called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Roll Call

Michelle Eitner, Planner (Town Staff)
Kelly Cousino, White Smith Cousino (UDO Consultant)
Caitlin Cameron, White Smith Cousino (UDO Consultant)
Paula Gillikin, Commissioner (UDO Steering Committee Member)
Jeremy Ganey, Building Inspector/Floodplain Administrator (Town Staff)
Ryan Neve, Planning Board Chairman (UDO Steering Committee Member)
Vic Fasolino, Planning Board Member (UDO Steering Committee Member)
John LoPiccolo, Commissioner (UDO Steering Committee Member)

Agenda Approval

Committee member Neve made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Fasolino. The motion carried unanimously.

Items for Discussion and Consideration

1. UDO Drafting Rules and Style Guide

Kelly Cousino introduced the UDO Drafting Rules and Style Guide as a technical document that is utilized mainly internally to guide the drafting of the UDO for consistency in numbering, formatting, and wording.

2. UDO Outline

Ms Cousino identified the UDO Outline as the proposed layout for articles, sections, and subsections of the document. Some changes may occur to the sections and subsections throughout drafting. The articles are structured so that the most used information is up front, including the zoning districts, use regulations, and development standards, and the less frequently used provisions are towards the back, such as nonconformities and violations and enforcement. The consultants have also mapped current LDO sections into the context of the

UDO sections to show where existing provisions would be moving forward, though many sections may be changed in drafting.

Discussion was held regarding including the UDO Vision, Principles, and Goals document as part of the UDO. The committee agreed to include the document at the beginning of the UDO and provide language to identify that it is not regulatory in nature.

Discussion was held confirming that Town Staff would have the ability to edit the UDO document following adoption for future amendments. The consultant agreed that the deliverables would include the UDO in Word document format with information on how to maintain the outline structure in the future.

3. Draft UDO Vision Statement

Ms Cousino introduced the UDO Vision, Goals, and Principles document. Discussion was held regarding including the document as part of the UDO. The committee agreed to include the document at the beginning of the UDO and provide language to identify that it is not regulatory in nature.

Discussion was held regarding updating the vision statement. The Committee arrived at "A future that reflects the history and potential of Beaufort's Neighborhoods and our thriving natural resources and community."

Discussion was held on the language structure, word choice, and intent of the goals and principles. Edits were offered and noted for revising. Revisions would be made by the consultants following review and discussion with the Board of Commissioners at that evening's meeting.

4. Proposed Resilience Approach

Ms Cousino began discussion of the proposed resilience framework by identifying that the Town has received a grant to complete resilience-related updates to development ordinances which is why these development standards are addressed in the first module of updates. The proposed framework of resilience standards are based on best practices and an attempt to present a comprehensive approach.

The Committee reviewed the proposed resilience approach and discussed the Non-Intensification Zone (NIZ), higher standards for construction/development, and a point system as a requirement or incentive.

The consultants agreed to provide additional information on points-based systems and include committee input in drafting of resilience standards. They outlined that community meetings would be happening later in the summer and that drafts would be brought to the committee as well as the Planning Board and Board of Commissioners.

Committee Comments

The Committee members thanked the consultants and staff for work done so far and expressed enthusiasm towards further work on the UDO.

Staff Comments

Staff thanked the committee and commented that the venue may change for future committee meetings to allow for greater public attendance.

Adjourn

 _____ Committee Staff – Approved _____

UDO Vision, Principles, & Goals

Revised ~~Draft~~ | ~~March 28~~ April 10, 2025



Vision for Growth

A future of thoughtful, sustainable growth that honors the history and potential of Beaufort’s neighborhoods while preserving its thriving natural resources and celebrating its strong community.

Principles Guiding Development of the UDO

1. The UDO is consistent with the 2023 Town of Beaufort *Comprehensive and CAMA Land Use Plan* and other adopted Town plans.
2. The UDO implements relevant aspects of the *CAMA Plan*’s eight Community Goals and the Character Areas drawn on the Future Land Use Map.
3. Outreach and opportunities for input are inclusive of all community members, businesses, and industries, including members of the development community.
4. New and revised regulations recognize and give equal measure to all communities and areas within the Town’s jurisdiction.
5. Discussions and opportunities for participation reflect minority representation consistent with the Town’s demographics.
6. Standards and regulations are consistent with the Town’s authority under North Carolina law.
7. Policy options and standards generate community support and balance multiple aspects relevant to each subject area.
8. The development of new and revised standards considers their potential economic impact.
9. The format of the final, adopted UDO is readily accessible to all users in hardcopy form as well as online.

Goals of the Town's New Unified Development Ordinance

1. Align future growth and services with the ~~carrying~~ capacity of existing and planned infrastructure, the both built and natural, ~~infrastructure necessary to serve them~~ support a thriving and resilient community.
2. ~~Increase~~ Expand the availability and diversity of housing options attainable to those who liveing and working in Beaufort, ~~in particular with a focus on supporting year-round residents~~ and the local workforce.
3. ~~Protect~~ Maintain the character of residential neighborhoods ~~by regulating while thoughtfully integrating compatible~~ short-term rentals and ~~allowing only limited types of compatible low impact~~ non-residential uses that support neighborhood vitality.
4. ~~Ensure~~ Promote context-sensitive development and redevelopment ~~of in~~ commercial and mixed-use areas ~~is context-appropriate~~ that enhance community identity and local economic activity.
5. ~~Encourage growth and building design that reduces~~ Support development and building practices that responsibly minimize environmental impacts on and help preserve the community's natural resources and habitatsassets, including forests, streams, wetlands, marshes, rivers waterways, and ~~creek~~shabitats.
6. ~~Limit the construction of~~ Strategically manage new utility and street infrastructure ~~and expansion of existing infrastructure inside development within~~ the Non-Intensification Zone, ~~except where allowed~~ for expansion where appropriate through balanced, approved ~~methods of~~ mitigation measures that support long-term community goals.
7. ~~Include~~ Encourage resilient building ~~standards practices~~ and locations that ~~mitigate damage~~ reduce risk and facilitate rapid recovery from storms and other extreme weather events.
8. ~~Recognize the effect~~ Acknowledge and plan for the evolving impacts of sea level rise and severe weather, ~~as measured by utilizing best-available science and data from sources such as NOAA, and weather events, such as hurricanes, on shorelines and other impact areas to guide responsible development~~.
9. ~~Protect~~ Strengthen and celebrate the historic and cultural ~~fabrie identity~~ of the Town Beaufort by protecting legacy neighborhoods and supporting preservation efforts, including, but not limited to particularly in, the historically downtown neighborhoods significant and vulnerable communitiesareas.
10. ~~Establish~~ Create clear, efficient, and user-friendly administrative processes that ~~are as efficient as possible for those using the UDO, while also achieving important Town objectives facilitate responsible development, support community goals, and its align with the Town's vision~~.
11. Utilize ~~Apply~~ zoning and subdivision ~~techniques strategies~~ that encourage higher density in appropriate areas direct growth toward areas with existing infrastructure or those where expansion is feasible and cost-effective, while

discouraging development in ~~vulnerable areas~~ high-risk or environmentally sensitive locations, and direct growth to areas with existing infrastructure or areas in which existing infrastructure can be feasibly and economically expanded.

12. ~~Encourage connectivity of~~ Promote a well-connected community through the thoughtful design of pedestrian routes, and bicycle routes networks, and along with community open spaces and recreational areas that foster healthy and active lifestyles.

Additional Information – Resilience Point Systems

UDO Steering Committee | April 2, 2025



At the request of the UDO Steering Committee, WSC is providing additional information about the resilience point system concept.

Resilience Point System – Examples

Four communities listed below have implemented similar point systems around sustainability goals. WSC interviewed staff from Norfolk, VA and Ithaca, NY about their experiences with implementation and lessons learned.

Norfolk, VA - Resilience Quotient (2019)

- **Objective:** In 2018, the City of Norfolk completed a comprehensive rewrite of its Zoning Ordinance to position the city as the resilient coastal community of the future. Norfolk's new zoning code was rewritten to strengthen the City's commitment to vibrant neighborhoods, economic diversity, and coastal resilience with the capacity to recover from climatic and environmental shocks. The zoning code contains a number of pioneering approaches in response to the challenges posed by sea level rise, one of which is a requirement that all development meet a resilience quotient. That section is intended to ensure development practices promote resiliency in various ways.
- **Applicability:** All new development must comply except for projects meeting LEED standards of gold level or above, renovation projects constructed prior to 2018, expansion of less than 50% gross floor area for buildings constructed prior to 2018, or historic buildings meeting certain criteria.
- **Point System:** The point system is arranged by development type – single-family, multi-family, and non-residential. Projects must achieve a minimum point value across three component categories based on the scale of development. The three component categories are:
 1. Risk Reduction
 2. Stormwater Management
 3. Energy Resilience
- **Example Strategies:** building construction that meets wind load requirements, impact resistant roof, operating procedures for power outage, LID or BMP infiltration systems, community garden space, retention of vegetation, tree preservation, open space beyond required, reduced energy generation, energy-

efficient lighting, provide alternative energy source, pervious paving, EV charging, adaptive reuse of existing building

- **Least-used Strategies:** green roof

Mount Pleasant, SC - Environmental Guidelines for Land Development (LID Program) (2023)

- **Objective:** To change the standard course of typical site design by creating a program that lays a path forward in promoting, encouraging, and incentivizing designers and developers to create projects that protect our natural resources. Based on a point system with incentives built in, this program is meant to be low-cost and easily achievable for all who wish to develop in the Town of Mount Pleasant with a focus on low-impact development.
- **Applicability:** New non-residential projects - multi-family residential, mixed-use development, HOA amenity centers, utilities, recreational facilities, land disturbance of 0.1 acres or greater, renovation projects exceeding \$250,000 in cost
- **Point System:** Based on the LEED v4 Certification program, projects must meet a minimum of 100 points in four categories. Points are pre-determined for each technique and derived from consideration to the cost, availability, effectiveness of the treatment, long term maintenance obligation, and innovative technological advances. This system does allow for “innovative” approaches not listed. The four impact categories are:
 1. Protect, Restore, and Conserve Natural Water Resources
 2. Preserve and Improve Ecosystem Biodiversity
 3. Improve Community Livability (Mobility, Aesthetics, Well-Being)
 4. Promote Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Material Resources

The guidelines include resources for applicants – such as sample language for deed restrictions and stormwater maintenance agreements and recommended planting lists. They also include notes from public engagement discussion of the policy and example communities with similar systems.

- **Example Strategies:** Use of pervious pavers, underground stormwater detention system, reduced impervious surface, tree canopy expansion/retention, renewable energy sources, noise and light pollution reduction techniques, EV charging, bicycle/transit amenities
- **Most-used Strategies:** pollinator gardens, light pollution reduction, Mount Pleasant Waterworks irrigation practices
- **Example Incentives:** When a project achieves 200 or 300 points (100 required)
 - Level 2 (200 points): Exemption from the Zoning Code bufferyard requirements (some exceptions apply); ability to design stormwater systems within a bufferyard; use of pervious materials for parking
 - Level 3 (300 points): Special recognition by Town; Award plaque displayed on site

Ithaca, NY - Energy Code Supplement (2021)

- **Objective:** The local code supplement establishes requirements above and beyond the state energy code. The requirements give priority to electrification, renewable energy, and affordability with the objectives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from buildings, promote best practices in the design of buildings, and to provide a transition from fossil fuels to more sustainable energy sources in buildings.
- **Applicability:** All new construction, additions 500 sf or larger (one- or two-family residential), additions 1,000 sf or larger (non-residential), and major renovations. Does not apply to construction of unconditioned space.
- **Point System:** The point system is divided into Commercial and Residential building types. Projects may also choose a prescriptive or performance-based compliance path. Most projects choose the “easy” method of the prescriptive checklist. Projects must earn at least 12 points in the following categories:
 1. Efficient Electrification
 2. Affordability Improvements
 3. Renewable Energy
 4. Other Points
- **Example Strategies:** The Sustainability Planner worked with a local engineering firm to develop the list of strategies, targeting a 10% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Strategies vary depending on whether the project is residential or commercial.
Use of heat pumps and electric appliances, smaller building/room sizes, efficient building shape, modest window/wall ratio, use of renewable energy systems, EV charging, adaptive reuse of existing buildings, walkability, right lighting, development density
- **Least-used Strategies:** Performance-based energy calculations - When using the performative standards, the project must prove the building will be more efficient than ASHRAE standards.

Somerville, MA - Green Score (2019)

- **Objective:** A performance-based development standards system for environmental landscapes. The desired result is an increase in the environmental performance and quality of urban landscape features especially related to reduction of storm water runoff, improvement of air quality, mitigation of heat island effect, and improved well-being of residents and visitors.
- **Applicability:** The landscape/site design for any new principal building, or substantial rehabilitation of principal building
- **Point System:** The point requirement is based on the lot area of the project. Projects receive points for various landscape/site plan strategies using a multiplier. The system allows for bonuses at the discretion of the review boards.
- **Example Strategies:** Number and size of trees and plantings, tree preservation, soil depth, vegetated buffers, pervious groundcovers, pervious paving

- **Bonus Strategies:** Using native species, harvesting rainwater for irrigation, removing pavement, food cultivation, publicly visible landscape

Evaluation

Required vs. Incentivized

- The examples we researched all require, with some flexibility, sustainability elements for new construction and substantial renovations/expansions of existing uses.
- Mount Pleasant, SC uses a negotiated approach. A partnership format fosters good relationships and demonstrating the Town's willingness to form positive public-private partnerships. They state that, "A lasting, positive program is paramount to success environmental land development program." They found that if the owner feels something is being mandated, they will not take ownership of the strategies. The LID program dovetails with existing stormwater requirements and helps projects achieve both objectives.
- Ithaca, NY provides for a prescriptive checklist or a custom energy model that is performance-based to allow flexibility. Most projects select the prescriptive checklist approach to simplify the process.
- In Somerville, MA, the Green Score system only applies to landscape/site design features of a project.

Associated Costs

- In Norfolk, VA, the development community opposed the implementation of the *Resilience Quotient* claiming the requirements would increase development costs up to \$10,000 per residential unit. After six years of implementation, the costs associated with including the resilience strategies have not increased construction costs (increase in material costs are more of an issue for cost of construction). With a point system, developers and homeowners have the flexibility to choose which strategies to employ that fit within a project budget. Norfolk reports the most-used strategies are those that have a low cost and provide little to no cost barrier to development or the resulting cost of housing. Examples include enhanced shutters, roofs, windows, and tree pits, or using LED lights – items that are increasingly available and standard in construction.
- Mount Pleasant, SC created their system with the goal of it being low-cost and easily achievable for developers. Their approach has been to require low-cost strategies and incentivize the voluntary use of additional sustainable components. They find that most point-gathering techniques do not have additional costs (e.g. rain gauge on irrigation system, water harvesting techniques, installing wildlife habitat).

- The Ithaca, NY example incorporates affordability for end users into its approach. Projects must achieve points within the “Affordability Improvements” category with strategies that reduce energy consumption and costs or maintenance costs. This is a different perspective of affordability to the upfront development costs.

Review

- In all cases, the point system is applied during the development review - usually Site Plan application phase. Ithaca, NY applies their energy code supplement at building permit review. Review is either at a staff or board level depending on the scale of the project.
- Norfolk, VA reflected that the local design/development community now understands how to use the point system and consultants submit the appropriate documentation of how the points are achieved without too much staff assistance/time.
- Staff/Review Boards spend time negotiating with applicants about alternative strategies and the appropriate point values.
- Mount Pleasant, SC finds their review is very easy because the program was designed to be tabulated in a chart that accompanies the application. When an applicant is unfamiliar with the point system, some time to educate the designer is needed.
- Ithaca, NY estimates that their energy code requirement adds one to two hours of review time to a project. When a project elects a custom energy calculation, it adds half to one full day of additional review to check calculations, communicate with applicant.
- Some strategies require additional review and documentation to implement. For example, off-site renewable energy requires proof of contract with energy company prior to issuance of building permit and then a recurring follow up every two years that the off-site energy is still being used.

Lessons Learned

- **Point Values:** Norfolk, VA finds the point values assigned to resilience strategies are not calibrated correctly according to the financial cost of implementation. The result is that projects use lower-cost strategies like enhanced shutters, roofs, windows, and tree pits over large-scale strategies such as a green roof. They propose amending their point values to better reflect the cost/benefit of major investment strategies that also produce comparable benefits.
- **Flexibility:** Norfolk, VA finds there is a necessary amount of negotiation of alternative strategies being requested by developers. Having more discretion built into the point system would allow the reviewer to accommodate additional strategies in an “innovation” category. Ithaca, NY has only had one variance request (requires Zoning Board of Appeals). There are unintended consequences of requiring the energy code supplement to

apply to any conditioned space – this has created unexpected requirements for projects like a conditioned garage or renovation project for one part of the building that then had implications for the entire building that was not being renovated. Mount Pleasant, SC includes bonus or incentives beyond the required strategies. They find that the incentive to reduce bufferyards has been beneficial to projects wanting to develop on smaller lots providing flexibility to trade space-consuming requirements like a buffer for other environmentally-minded strategies.

- Review:** Norfolk, VA has a point system that includes building strategies as well as site strategies. However, because compliance with the *Resilience Quotient* is reviewed at the Site Plan application, developers/home builders do not always have completed building plans for the reviewer to assess. For larger projects, this requires a condition of approval to review the sustainability measures for the buildings prior to building permit or Certificate of Occupancy. For smaller projects, this means some compliance falls through the cracks without the ability to review or enforce building-related items.
Ithaca, NY finds that performance-based review or flexible options adds time to the review compared with a streamlined checklist for the prescriptive option that most projects use.
- Education:** Ithaca, NY received a grant for a pilot educational program for the energy code supplement. This included education and outreach by staff to the development and design professional community and creating a public website. They estimate this improved compliance and reduces staff time needed to educate applicants.

Alternative Strategies

- Sustainability and Resilient Buildings Questionnaire (Somerville, MA):** One alternative to the point scoring system would be to require each new development project submit a questionnaire that calls attention to several categories of resilience for site plan and building development. By requiring the questionnaire, development projects are prompted to consider sustainable features of their projects without the City requiring specific strategies as with a scorecard system. The resulting resiliency of new development will be less predictable and likely less impactful. Categories of questions might include:
 - Building & Site Details
 - Green Building Certifications
 - Electric Vehicle Parking/Alternative Transportation Facilities
 - Energy Systems
 - Climate Risk and Vulnerability / Management