CAROLINA BEACH

Planning and Zoning Commission

Thursday, October 8, 2026 - 6:00 PM

Council Chambers, 1121 N. Lake Park Boulevard, Carolina Beach, NC

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER
Chairman Hogan called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

PRESENT
Chairman Jeff Hogan
Vice Chairman Bill Carew
Commissioner Melanie Boswell
Commissioner Ethan Crouch
Commissioner Todd Piper
Commissioner Brad Jones

ABSENT
Commissioner Lynn Conto

ALSO PRESENT
Community Development Director Jeremy Hardison
Senior Planner Gloria Abbotts
Planner Haley Anderson

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. August 13, 2026 Minutes

ACTION: Motion to approve the minutes
Motion made by Vice Chairman Carew, seconded by Commissioner Boswell
Voting Yea: Chairman Hogan, Vice Chairman Carew, Commissioner Boswell, Commissioner Crouch, Commissioner Piper, Commissioner Jones
Motion passed 6-0

STAFF REPORT ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS
Mr. Hardison reported the following during the past two months:

Permitting

- 68 permits (renovation, repair, grading, additions, fences, etc.)
    - 9 residential new construction
- 7 certificates of occupancy

Demos

- 816 Harper Avenue (mobile home)
- 207 Texas Avenue (mobile home)

No development plans have been received for these properties.

Updates and upcoming

- SpringHill Suites is ready to begin by demolishing the restaurant and mobilizing next week. It will then construct the oceanfront restaurant and conference space, which it hopes to open by next summer. The hotel across the street is expected in spring 2028.
- Council September 8
    - Conditional Zoning (CZ) modification for Proximity: Council approved the modification that the Commission previously heard.
- Council October 13
    - Second Street assessment: This concerns the 1000 block of Second Street, which lacked an approved right-of-way and which the adjacent property owners petitioned the Town to improve. The Town will cover one-third of the cost and adjacent owners two-thirds. About four homes are expected on each side of the road, and the street dead-ends at Carolina Sands.
- Technical Review Committee (TRC) October 6
    - CZ Stoked floating dock: The text amendment extending the pierhead line farther out for floating structures was approved with CZ. Stoked Restaurant has applied to extend its dock facility and increase outdoor seating. That request must return to the Commission; only the text amendment had been approved.
    - Text amendment lighting: This was initiated in response to complaints about commercial and residential lighting shining onto adjacent properties.
    - Text amendment increase parking: This would decrease the allowance for golf cart and compact parking and restore employee parking requirements removed during the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) process. Staff has concerns about how the latter could affect the State's downzoning provisions.
    - Lake Park improvements: The Town is demolishing the old bathrooms and widening the pedestrian bridge at the picnic shelter to 10 feet to relieve a choke point, and it will increase the sidewalk area.
    - Ice rink: The Pleasure Island Chamber of Commerce presented plans for an ice rink on the Boardwalk, between the stage and the bathrooms, operating from November to January.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

PUBLIC HEARING

2. Consider a Conditional Zoning for a 16-Unit Mixed-Use Building at 308 Carolina Beach Avenue North
   Applicant: KMB Investments, LLC

Chairman Hogan said this item had been removed from the agenda.

3. Consider a Conditional Zoning Modification for an Outdoor Space Expansion for the Event Venue/Bar at 205 Charlotte Avenue in the Central Business District (CBD)
   Applicant: Common Ground Holdings

Ms. Abbotts presented the request to expand the outdoor area of the event venue at 205 Charlotte Avenue. The venue was approved in July 2023 and received a first modification in 2024 for the existing outdoor area. The proposed expansion is roughly 2,500 square feet and includes artificial turf, a paver walkway, a 10-foot pergola, and additional landscaping. The original CZ designated any change to the outdoor area as a major modification. The 2024 modification included a landscaping waiver for a tank.

A public input meeting was held on August 7, and no neighbors attended or raised concerns.

Staff found the request to be in general conformity with the Land Use Plan and recommended approval. The 2024 conditions would remain unchanged.

Chairman Hogan asked about the condition requiring the 20-foot driveway cut to remain open and accessible, noting the tight access he had observed. Ms. Abbotts explained that the applicant owns the adjacent property and will relocate the cut to the right side, widening it to 20 feet and removing some landscaping to ease entry and exit. She stated that the reconfiguration can be approved at the staff level.

Vice Chairman Carew asked about the conditions originally recommended by the Commission. Ms. Abbotts said they were in the grant order included in the packet and that no conditions had changed apart from outdoor alcohol sales. She added that the applicant mentioned in 2023 that outdoor operations would end at 11:00 PM, but this was never formalized as a condition and appears only in the minutes.

ACTION: Motion to open the public hearing
Motion made by Chairman Hogan, seconded by Vice Chairman Carew
Voting Yea: Chairman Hogan, Vice Chairman Carew, Commissioner Boswell, Commissioner Crouch, Commissioner Piper, Commissioner Jones
Motion passed 6-0

David Hamlet of 1414 Snapper Lane, an owner of Kindred Weddings and Events and Common Ground Holdings, spoke as an applicant representative. He said there is strong demand in the wedding industry for outdoor ceremonies and that the expansion would add turf, bushes, and a platform for ceremonies. Mr. Hamlet said alcohol would not be sold within 20 feet and that the business model would not change.

Commissioner Piper asked about the end time of outdoor receptions. Mr. Hamlet said outdoor receptions start about 5:30 PM and usually end about 9:30 or 10:00 PM, and all events abide by the Town's noise ordinance.

At Chairman Hogan's request, Mr. Hardison confirmed that staff had received no noise complaints in the three years since the venue opened.

No one else requested to speak.

ACTION: Motion to close the public hearing
Motion made by Chairman Hogan, seconded by Vice Chairman Carew
Voting Yea: Chairman Hogan, Vice Chairman Carew, Commissioner Boswell, Commissioner Crouch, Commissioner Piper, Commissioner Jones
Motion passed 6-0

Commissioner Crouch said the venue has become a unique space and an icon of the Town. He praised the preservation of the original structure and supported the change while nothing there could be parking impacts but added that is to be expected in the Central Business District (CBD).

Commissioner Jones agreed but raised concerns about the many homes surrounding the property and suggested a time limitation, such as 9:00 PM.

Commissioner Piper noted three years of operation without problems and said written language limiting outdoor festivities after a certain time would not hurt.

Commissioner Boswell supported approval without a time constraint, citing the lack of complaints and noting that any future change or sale would return to the Commission.

Commissioner Carew initially shared Commissioner Jones' view but said the three-year record made him less firm on the condition.

Chairman Hogan asked what time limit might be considered. Mr. Hardison stated that nighttime hours under the noise ordinance in the CBD begin at 11:00 PM on weekdays, with Friday and Saturday extending to midnight. Commissioner Carew then said it would be unfair to require one CBD entity to observe a limit that others do not, and he withdrew the idea of a time limit. Commissioner Jones agreed. Chairman Hogan concurred, noting the absence of complaints, the availability of Police enforcement if violations occurred, and the owners' preservation of the building.

ACTION: Motion for approval; whereas in accordance with the provisions of the NCGS, Planning and Zoning does hereby find and determine that the adoption of the Conditional Zoning district modification to allow for a 2,500-square-foot outdoor area for the event venue/bar at 205 Charlotte Avenue is consistent with the goals and objectives and of the adopted Land Use Plan and other long-range plans and the potential impacts on the surrounding area are mitigated by the approved conditions
Motion made by Vice Chairman Carew, seconded by Commissioner Boswell
Voting Yea: Chairman Hogan, Vice Chairman Carew, Commissioner Boswell, Commissioner Crouch, Commissioner Piper, Commissioner Jones
Motion passed 6-0

4. Consider a Text Amendment to Allow for Additional Accessory Structures
   Applicant: Town of Carolina Beach

Planner Haley Anderson presented the details. She explained that Council directed staff at its August meeting to examine flexibility in the number of accessory structures allowed per lot and that staff was seeking the Commission's input before taking the proposal to Council. The amendment would:

- remove the limit of one accessory structure per lot
- remove the individual size requirement
- require that the cumulative size of all accessory structures not exceed the primary structure
- require a minimum of 5 feet between accessory structures
- consolidate residential and non-residential standards, with accessory structures remaining subject to maximum lot coverage and impervious surface limits

Residential structures would remain subject to existing height limits and the prohibition on leasing or occupancy. They would also keep the limit of three internal plumbing fixtures, and a building permit would still be required above 12 feet.

Ms. Anderson reviewed the history. The 2000 ordinance introduced the one-structure limit, allowing structures up to 25% of allowable lot coverage. This was changed in 2004 to 25% of the developed area and clarified in 2009 to 25% of the primary structure. A citizen-initiated amendment increasing the number, height, and size of accessory structures was recommended for denial by the Commission in August 2025 and denied by Council. The concerns were height, illegal conversion to accessory dwelling units (ADUs), and a pending State bill that would permit additional dwelling units without parking requirements. That bill is now State law but applies only to communities with more than 50,000 residents. Staff found general conformity with the Land Use Plan, citing the goal of reducing non-conformities, and supported the amendment as a simplification that provides flexibility to owners.

In response to Commissioner Carew’s questions, Ms. Anderson said fire separation requirements apply only to dwelling units, with a minimum of 3 feet with fire-rated materials. Staff chose the 5-foot separation because most municipalities surveyed used it, with ranges from none to 10 feet. Ms. Anderson added that structures converted to dwelling units would need building permits, would have to meet building code and Town setbacks, and would count toward the 40% lot coverage limit unless future State law changed this.

ACTION: Motion to open the public hearing
Motion made by Chairman Hogan, seconded by Vice Chairman Carew
Voting Yea: Chairman Hogan, Vice Chairman Carew, Commissioner Boswell, Commissioner Crouch, Commissioner Piper, Commissioner Jones
Motion passed 6-0

Alan Gilbert of Bonito Lane thanked Commissioners for their service and raised several concerns. He said the Town does not define "occupied," that a structure with plumbing fixtures would functionally be occupied, and that the Town's interpretation language refers to "actual use," so the wording needs clarification. Mr. Gilbert asked whether a chicken coop is an accessory structure. Mr. Hardison said it is a structure but is exempt from the accessory structure limit, although Mr. Gilbert said it was not on the

exemption list. He said allowing toilets, showers, lavatories, and water heaters in multiple accessory structures creates an enforcement problem. Mr. Gilbert also asked which Council Member initiated the amendment and cautioned against selective zoning for special interests.

Ashley Hunter of 221 Teakwood Drive thanked staff for bringing back the item and supported the amendment as beneficial. She suggested considering restrictions on the number of structures based on lot size. Ms. Hunter said three fixtures alone do not make a dwelling, because a kitchen is also required, and that the amendment would bring some properties into conformity and let owners use larger lots.

No one else requested to speak.

ACTION: Motion to close the public hearing
Motion made by Chairman Hogan, seconded by Commissioner Boswell
Voting Yea: Chairman Hogan, Vice Chairman Carew, Commissioner Boswell, Commissioner Crouch, Commissioner Piper, Commissioner Jones
Motion passed 6-0

Commissioner Piper said some parcels have ample room and the single-structure limit may be unfair, and he would like to see what was proposed on Teakwood Drive. He was concerned that the amendment would result in short-term rentals in backyards, given that the Town currently lacks the ability to enforce against illegal rentals, including trailers and campers.

Commissioner Crouch noted that the Commission recommended denial of a much smaller change in 2025 and said he was surprised to see this broader proposal, particularly as a Council-driven request. He argued that removing the structure limit and the 25% size cap would affect density and neighborhood aesthetics and could allow structures equal in size to the primary dwelling. Commissioner Crouch said the single sentence in the ordinance prohibiting occupancy does not currently protect the community and that the change would greatly increase the enforcement burden. He said he was strongly opposed and did not believe it aligned with the Land Use Plan.

Commissioner Jones agreed it would open a "Pandora's box" for enforcement and said he is unsure this is the correct solution at this time.

Commissioner Boswell asked whether the amendment was Council- or staff-driven. Ms. Anderson stated that one Council member raised it and Council directed staff at the August meeting. Commissioner Boswell questioned why the item seemed rushed, agreed with Mr. Gilbert's points, and said that as an insurance agent she knows that a structure with electricity and running water, in which one could place a chair, is an occupied unit. She recommended a workshop among the Commission, staff, and Council, as is done for UDO amendments. Commissioner Boswell said she is strongly opposed to the amendment as written and will not vote for it.

Commissioner Carew said he liked the goal of expanding property owners' rights but felt the draft has missing definitions. He questioned, for example, whether a lamppost is exempt like a flagpole.

Commissioner Carew said the draft felt rushed and that he could not support it as written, though a revised version could meet the needs of residents like Ms. Hunter.

Chairman Hogan agreed with Commissioners and asked Mr. Hardison how to proceed without tabling the item. Mr. Hardison advised that the Commission could send a motion to Council with its concerns and comments. Chairman Hogan and Commissioner Boswell discussed a denial paired with a recommendation for a workshop to rework the language.

ACTION: Motion for denial; whereas in accordance with the provisions of the NCGS, the Commission does hereby find and determine that the adoption of the following text amendment for Article 3, Section 3.6 Accessory Use Standards is inconsistent with the goals and objectives of the Land Use Plan and other long-range plans, and the Commission recommends that we look into this further with a workshop with Council and staff
Motion made by Commissioner Boswell, seconded by Vice Chairman Carew
Voting Yea: Chairman Hogan, Vice Chairman Carew, Commissioner Boswell, Commissioner Crouch, Commissioner Piper, Commissioner Jones
Motion passed 6-0

Chairman Hogan stated that the amendment was recommended for denial and said that the wording needs to be worked out as a group to produce something that's good for the community.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS
Commissioner Boswell asked about activity at Lake Park. Mr. Hardison confirmed that the demolition of the old bathrooms was scheduled to begin that day. Commissioner Crouch noted that other recent activity in the area was a separate residential home under construction on wetlands.

ADJOURNMENT
ACTION: Motion for adjournment
Motion made by Chairman Hogan, seconded by Vice Chairman Carew
Voting Yea: Chairman Hogan, Vice Chairman Carew, Commissioner Boswell, Commissioner Crouch, Commissioner Piper, Commissioner Jones
Motion passed 6-0

Chairman Hogan adjourned the meeting at 6:50 PM.