

## **TOWN OF BOWLING GREEN PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

### **M I N U T E S**

**Thursday, August 20, 2026  
6:00 PM**

#### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

- Chair Matthew Benjamin called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:02 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Commissioner Seigmund motioned to approve Commissioner Voit's electronic participation pursuant to the Town's electronic participation policy due to work obligations. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Gattie and carried unanimously.

#### **ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM:**

**Commissioners Present:** Chair Matthew Benjamin, Vice-Chair Lisa Gattie, Commissioner Lauren Griensman, Commissioner Scott Seigmund, Commissioner Jeff Voit (participating electronically)

**Staff Present:** Darla Odom, Planner; Jeffrey Smith, Administrative Assistant/Deputy Clerk

#### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:**

1. June 18, 2026 Minutes
  - Chair Benjamin motioned to approve the June 18, 2026, meeting minutes. Commissioner Seigmund seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
2. July 16, 2026 Minutes
  - Commissioner Griensman motioned to approve the July 16, 2026, meeting minutes. Vice-Chair Gattie seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-PUBLIC HEARING PLANNING COMMISSION/LAND USE MATTERS:**

- Chair Benjamin opened public comment at 6:06 PM. No comments were presented, and public comment was closed at 6:07 PM.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING:**

3. Zoning Map Adoption - Case # ZMA 26-01
  - Chair Benjamin opened the public hearing at 6:09 PM. Darla Odom, Planner, explained that Caroline County's GIS staff had digitized the Town's existing paper zoning map to create an official digital zoning map and that the proposed map was not intended to change any property's zoning. No public comments were presented, and the public hearing was closed at 6:10 PM. Commission discussion addressed the R-1, R-2, and R-3 residential districts; existing multifamily, duplex, residential-care, and converted residential uses; special-use permits and lawful nonconforming uses; and the need to review historical zoning records when the origin of a use is unclear. Commissioners also requested graphical revisions so street names would not obscure parcel boundaries and discussed the labeling of Courthouse Road, County Street, A.P. Hill Boulevard, and Bowling Green Bypass. Commissioner Voit identified several apparent zoning discrepancies requiring further review, including Habitat for Humanity properties near East Broadus Avenue and Travis Street, a residential property on Chase Street behind the water tower, 221 North Main Street, and the Fairmont property, which should be shown as Planned Unit Development and added to the legend. Staff recommended postponing action to verify these and other prior rezonings and to revise the map's labeling and readability.

- Commissioner Gattie motioned to table Zoning Map Adoption Case # ZMA 26-01 pending additional research and correction of the identified parcels and map details. Chair Benjamin seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

##### 4. Comprehensive Plan Update - New Community Facilities and Services Data

- Jeffrey Smith, Administrative Assistant/Deputy Clerk, presented updated Chapter 7 data concerning public safety, healthcare and assistance facilities, public utilities, and public-school enrollment and capacity. The public-safety tables consolidated the Police Chief's monthly reports from 2025 to the present. Commissioners requested that the table retain the Chief's terminology while clearly labeling 'Traffic Summonses,' place 'Other Activity' immediately above 'Total Activity,' and clarify what may be included within other activity. Discussion of wastewater data focused on the difference between average and peak daily flow, with staff explaining that elevated peak flow commonly reflects storm-related inflow and infiltration. The Commission noted the chapter's future-needs recommendation to reduce inflow and infiltration and rehabilitate aging collection infrastructure, and Commissioner Voit reported that recent sewer repairs had materially changed flows reaching the treatment plant.

##### 5. Comprehensive Plan Chapter 5 - Revision Status Update

- Mr. Smith summarized revisions to Chapter 5, including clearer distinctions among Town, Caroline County, and George Washington Regional Commission data; more consistent reporting periods based principally on the latest American Community Survey five-year estimates; notes where newer data were unavailable; and definitions for acronyms and sources such as Esri and geographic information systems. He reported that business-license data were being refined to distinguish new and renewed businesses by year and that work continued on a trade-area population graphic for 5-, 15-, and 30-minute drive times. The Commission supported prioritizing Town-specific data while using county or regional information when relevant and clearly qualified. Commissioners favored keeping charts near the supporting narrative, complimented the revised graphics, and requested that the COVID-19 annotation on the unemployment chart be repositioned so it would not overlap the chart title.

##### 6. Comprehensive Plan Community Profile Data Update

- Mr. Smith presented revisions to the Community Profile tables using the 2024 American Community Survey five-year estimates where available. Updates included source citations for each table, a Town-scaled population-change graphic, clarification that 'no bedroom' generally refers to studio-type housing units, separate unemployment and work-from-home tables, Bureau of Labor Statistics sourcing where applicable, and updated school enrollment and capacity data. Commissioners asked staff to identify more clearly which schools were represented in the enrollment-by-grade table, verify apparent differences among school data tables, and investigate why the Town's five-year estimates did not show the same 2020 unemployment and work-from-home patterns evident at the county and regional levels.

##### 7. Comprehensive Plan Update - Chapter 3: Environment

- Ms. Odom presented a diagnostic review of Chapter 3 identifying mandatory state-code elements, best-practice recommendations, existing plan coverage, and areas needing stronger policies, objectives, strategies, and maps. She noted that Department of Environmental Quality recommendations would be incorporated and discussed efforts to obtain regional or county assistance with updated mapping. Discussion addressed the creek referenced in the existing plan, ownership and permitting considerations, Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area boundaries, drainage features, wetlands, and the need to confirm whether mapped tributaries and protected areas remain accurate. Ms. Odom advised that draft chapters on the environment, transportation, housing, and land use would follow, including state-required policy updates concerning affordable housing and manufactured housing.

- Chair Benjamin motioned to amend the agenda by adding Item 8, Comprehensive Plan Utilities Update, and Item 9, Comprehensive Plan Overall Update. Commissioner Griemsmann seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
8. Comprehensive Plan Utilities Update
- Ms. Odom asked whether Commissioners had additional comments on the utilities section previously distributed for review. Commissioners reported no further comments and indicated that staff could proceed with the draft as presented.
9. Comprehensive Plan Overall Update
- Ms. Odom reviewed the remaining Comprehensive Plan schedule and emphasized the need to circulate draft chapters before the joint Planning Commission and Town Council work session and public open house scheduled for October 22, 2026. She advised that she would update Town Council on September 3 and anticipated presenting environmental and either transportation or housing materials at the September 17 Planning Commission meeting, with the remaining draft materials to follow. Commissioners discussed written review deadlines and the value of an additional work session to ensure the Commission's review was complete before meeting jointly with Town Council. Chair Benjamin stated that he would attempt to attend the September 3 Town Council meeting.
  - Vice-Chair Gattie motioned to schedule a Comprehensive Plan work session for October 8, 2026, at 6:00 PM. Commissioner Seigmund seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None.

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

- Mr. Smith announced that the Town's KaBOOM! playground Design Day would be held Friday, August 21, from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM at the Town playground, 117 Butler Street. He noted that refreshments would be provided and encouraged Commissioners to attend and participate in planning the funded playground improvements.

**COMMISSION COMMENTS AND REPORTS:**

- Commissioners thanked staff for the Comprehensive Plan revisions and noted the progress being made toward a cohesive draft.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

- Commissioner Voit motioned to adjourn the meeting. Vice-Chair Gattie seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 7:49 PM.

Attest:

Chair: \_\_\_\_\_  
Matthew Benjamin

Clerk: \_\_\_\_\_  
India Adams-Jacobs, MPA, ICMA-CM