

Minutes

PLANNING BOARD & BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Joint public hearing

7:00 p.m. February 19, 2026

Board Meeting Room of Town Hall Annex, 105 E. Corbin St.



Present

Town board: Mayor Mark Bell and commissioners Robb English, Kathleen Ferguson, and Matt Hughes

Planning Board: Chair Hooper Schultz, Vice Chair Sherra Lawrence, and members Jeanette Benjey, Sean Kehoe, Robert Iglesias, Kimberly Landaverde, and Carrie Winkler

Absent: Commissioners Meaghun Darab and Evelyn Lloyd

Staff: Asst. Town Manager/Community Services Director Matt Efird, Planning and Economic Development Manager Shannan Campbell, Senior Planner Molly Boyle, and Town Attorney Robert Hornik

1. Call to order, confirmation of quorum, and public charge

Mayor Mark Bell called the joint meeting to order and confirmed the presence of a quorum. He reviewed the public charge and passed the gavel to Planning Board Chair Hooper Schultz to conduct the meeting.

2. Agenda changes and approval

Schultz asked if there were any suggested changes to the agenda. Bell stated that Town Attorney Robert Hornik was requesting a closed session with the town board and Planning Board. This would be the new item 3 on the agenda.

Motion: Commissioner Robb English moved to approve the amended agenda and move into closed session. Commissioner Kathleen Ferguson seconded.

Vote: 10-0. Motion passed.

3. Closed session

Closed session as authorized by North Carolina General Statute Section 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with the town attorney to preserve the attorney-client privilege.

Mayor Bell, the commissioners, and the Planning Board left the room to enter closed session. They returned after approximately ten minutes.

4. Open the public hearing

Motion: Ferguson motioned to open the public hearing. Planning Board member Robert Iglesias seconded.

Vote: 10-0. Motion passed.

Senior Planner Molly Boyle addressed the audience and welcomed everyone to the public hearing. She introduced the boards, explained the purpose and process of the public hearing, and asked members to sign up on the sheet by the door if they wished to speak that evening.

5. Public hearings

A. Rezoning request for 202 Holiday Park Road; PIN 9865407877 (applicant-initiated)

Boyle explained the property owner, Home Hillsborough LLC, was requesting to rezone their 6.25-acre parcel at 202 Holiday Park Road from General Commercial (GC) to Neighborhood Business (NB). The property has an existing 6,000 square foot warehouse building.

Boyle said both General Commercial and Neighborhood Business are commercial districts, but Neighborhood Business is a lower intensity district intended to serve immediately surrounding neighborhoods rather than the community at large. She said if approved, this would be considered a down-zoning. Senate Bill 382 prohibits government-initiated down-zonings, but this down-zoning would be permissible because it was initiated by the property owner.

Ferguson raised concerns about the rezoning since the property was part of the Highway 70/Corenlius Street gateway. Boyle asked the managing member of Home Hillsborough LLC, Gregg Pacchiana, to come to the podium and discuss his reasoning behind the rezoning request.

Pacchiana explained that their current tenant, a wine wholesaler, will not be renewing their lease at the existing warehouse. The LLC has a potential tenant, a church, but churches are not allowed in the General Commercial district. He noted this is a temporary solution while they evaluate long-term redevelopment plans, ideally for some type of mixed-use development. He noted that even though the potential tenant is a church, the church would be leasing the property, not owning it. So, the town would still get commercial tax revenue from the property. It would not be tax exempt.

Boyle said the applicant had also considered applying for a text amendment to allow churches in the General Commercial district. Staff had recommended against the idea since 1) churches are allowed in several other zoning districts and 2) that would open the entire General Commercial district to a significant non-commercial use.

Commissioner Ferguson expressed concern about losing light industrial capacity with the down-zoning. Property owner Gregg Pacchiana acknowledged this concern but stated the LLC is comfortable with the risk, believing their long-term vision for the property aligns with the town's plans for the area.

No public speakers signed up for this item.

B. Rezoning request and development agreement for 715 US Highway 70 East; PIN 9874490155 (applicant-initiated)

Planning and Economic Development Manager Shannan Campbell presented the staff report for the rezoning and development agreement requests for the 13.4-acre undeveloped property owned by KEPSC LLC. The property is currently zoned Assisted Living Neighborhood (ALN), and the applicant was requesting to rezone it to Multi-Family (MF). Attorney Robin Tatum was present to represent the applicant.

Campbell noted that the property was part of the original Corbinton Commons Retirement Campus master plan from the early 2000s. The original plan included 47-69 single family homes, which were built as Corbinton Commons, and either a 142-unit assisted living facility or a 275-unit continuing care retirement community on the eastern parcel, which was never developed.

The applicant is proposing approximately 67 townhome units, a small amenity center, parking, landscaping, and trails. The 10-year development agreement includes several key provisions:

- a \$40,000 payment to the affordable housing fund;
- private streets with required infrastructure standards;
- sidewalks along Highway 70 frontage;
- walking trail connections to Corbinton Commons; and
- repairs to the existing pedestrian bridge between properties.

Campbell explained that water and sewer service will be available no later than June 30, 2028, with infrastructure improvements including two water line connection points and connection to the Corbinton Commons pump station. She said that pump station upgrades are needed and will be funded through system development fees paid by the project.

After Campbell finished her presentation, the public comment period began.

Lynn Parker, representing the Corbinton Commons Homeowners' Association, expressed concerns about the proposed trail connectivity between the developments. She argued that connecting trails made sense when both developments were planned as 55+ communities, but it no longer makes sense with the multifamily proposal bringing younger residents and children who might jog, run, and bicycle on trails used by aging residents with slower walking speeds and diminished reflexes. She also raised concerns about the pedestrian bridge needing to be replaced rather than just being repaired. She also requested that the new development contribute to the \$10,000 annual easement payment Corbinton Commons makes for downtown access.

Andrea Shapiro, whose Saint Mary's Road property is directly south of the development, questioned how the multifamily proposal could be considered "mostly comparable" to the original assisted living plan. She noted that healthcare bed residents typically don't drive, while 67 multifamily units would bring at least 100 cars to an already congested area. She compared the density to suburban Los Angeles and questioned where children would play, expressing concerns about inadequate amenities for families. She requested clearer information about landscaping buffers and whether they would be properly maintained.

Lee Gordon raised multiple concerns including lighting, the 50-foot buffer, traffic impacts on Highway 70, water capacity issues given Hillsborough's growth, and general infrastructure pressures. He questioned whether the town has adequate water and sewer capacity and noted that residents would need to shop elsewhere since local commercial areas remain underdeveloped.

Don Bryson, a retired civil engineer and Corbinton Commons resident, stated technical concerns about the pedestrian bridge, noting that several piers are in the creek and have been undermined by flooding. He stressed the need for clear maintenance agreements since the bridge straddles property lines. He also questioned the condition of existing utility easements that have not been maintained and raised concerns about a partially built retaining wall that has deteriorated.

Michael Trivette asked about funding for needed pump station upgrades and road quality standards, given Corbinton Commons' previous road issues that required public intervention. Trivette was the last member of

the public who had signed up to speak, so the boards began their discussion.

Ferguson questioned the private road arrangement, expressing concern about maintenance responsibilities and town staff time dealing with issues the town cannot resolve. She sought clarification on construction standards and long-term maintenance arrangements.

Attorney Robin Tatum explained that the development agreement requires compliance with all UDO standards, the street manual, building code, and fire prevention code requirements. Maintenance responsibility would fall to the property owner, though specific arrangements have not been determined and may involve covenants.

Campbell clarified that these would function more like parking lots than traditional streets, similar to other multifamily developments, with private maintenance by a master ownership entity. Several board members expressed concerns about road quality given the history of problems with Corbinton Commons.

C. Text amendment to UDO Sec. 2.5.7, Historic District Commission – Quorum & Necessary Vote (staff-initiated)

Boyle presented this staff-initiated text amendment on behalf of her colleague, Joseph Hoffheimer, who was not at the meeting. She said the current UDO regulations are more restrictive than state statute regarding quorum requirements for the Historic District Commission. Approximately two meetings per year must be canceled due to inability to meet quorum.

The proposed amendment would change the language from requiring "four members" to "a majority of members," with vacant positions and disqualified members not counted toward the majority calculation. This would address problems with vacant seats, member absences, and recusals.

Campbell explained that the commission currently has two vacant seats, which, when combined with absences and recusals, creates frequent quorum problems. She noted recruitment difficulties due to the specialized nature of the board.

Ferguson asked about recusal standards. Town Attorney Bob Hornik clarified that members are not actually recusing themselves. Rather, they are technically disqualified from voting under certain circumstances, such as living next door to a subject property.

Commissioner Matt Hughes suggested revising the language to match state statute more closely, noting that the general statute requires "demonstrated special interest, experience, or education," while the UDO requires members to be "qualified by special interest, knowledge, or training," with the statute language potentially providing more flexibility for recruitment.

Several solutions were discussed, including changing commission membership from seven full members to five full members and two alternates, similar to the town's Board of Adjustment. Boyle and Hornik noted this would require a separate text amendment and public hearing. Staff said they would revise the text amendment based on board feedback and bring the item back to the public hearing in May.

6. Close the public hearing

Motion: Planning Board member Sean Kehoe motioned to close the public hearing. Planning Board Vice Chair Sherra Lawrence seconded.

Vote: 10-0. Motion passed.

Mayor Bell and the commissioners left. The Planning Board took a five-minute recess to allow the elected officials to leave.

7. Planning Board recommendations

The Planning Board discussed their recommendations on the public hearing items.

For the 202 Holiday Park rezoning, Iglesias noted that the Neighborhood Business zoning aligns with the future land use designation of retail services and is consistent with the UDO, though it is less intensive than the current zoning. Members generally acknowledged they were not inherently opposed to the rezoning, but they thought the request to down-zone was unusual.

Motion: Iglesias motioned to recommend approval of the rezoning request for 202 Holiday Park. Seconded by Kehoe.

Vote: 7-0. Motion passed.

The Planning Board decided not to make a recommendation on the 715 US Hwy 70 East rezoning. The board said it would continue to discuss the proposal at its meeting in March.

8. Updates

A. Board of Adjustment

Iglesias reported that the Board of Adjustment recently heard two special use permit requests: one for a driveway modification for Auman Village, which was approved, and one for an extension on the Special Use Permit for Collins Ridge Phase 2, which was also approved.

B. Parks and Recreation Board

Schultz reported on the draft master plan for Kings Highway Park, which will be renamed Kings Highway Natural Area to better reflect its character as a natural space rather than a traditional park with active play areas and equipment.

C. Staff and board members

Boyle announced that the March meeting will include the annual business meeting with elections for the Parks & Recreation Board representative and Board of Adjustment representative positions. Chair and vice chair elections were completed in January when Frank Casadonte rotated off the board.

9. Adjournment

Motion: Kehoe motioned to adjourn the meeting. Lawrence seconded.

Vote: 7-0. Motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Molly Boyle, Senior Planner
Staff support to the Planning Board
Approved: Month X, 202X