



**AMHERST COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING**



MINUTES

May 21, 2026

Administrative Office Complex
153 Washington Street
Public Meeting Room
Meeting Convened - 7:00 PM

1. Call to Order

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael Bryant (Chair), Beverly Jones, Susan Schjonning, Michael Martineau, Jim Thompson, Chris Adams (Board of Supervisors Liaison), Calvin Kennon (EDA Representative)

MEMBERS ABSENT: George Wise

STAFF PRESENT: Tyler Creasy (Director of Community Development), Tyler Amburgey (Assistant Zoning Administrator), Haley Alger (Administrative Assistant)

Chairman Bryant called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

2. Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Bryant led the Invocation and then the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved with one change.

Addition under Old/New Business: to read and discuss a letter from a citizen requesting a code change that would make data centers be a Special Exception.

Motion: Thompson

Second: Jones

Motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

4. Citizens Comments

Barbara Pryor spoke in opposition to data centers, referencing the potential of environmental concerns.

Rebecca Levingham spoke in opposition to data centers. Her concern was in regard to her

living within 6 miles of an area where one would currently be allowed, and the potential of water usage.

5. Public Hearing - Special Exception

A. 2026-189 Norman and Lisa Black

Request by Norman and Lisa Black for a special exception request in the Route 130 Overlay District. The purpose of the special exception is to allow a manufactured home. The property is zoned A-1 Agricultural Residential District and located at tax map number 103-3-4.

Mr. Creasy presented the staff report and concluded his comments by stating that staff recommended the following conditions:

1. The site shall be developed in general conformance with the illustrative drawing depicting the location of the well, drain field and house, which is part of the submitted application dated April 2, 2026.
2. The proposed driveway shall meet all fire access requirements as prescribed by the County's Fire Marshall prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.
3. A twenty (20') foot vegetative buffer shall remain along the front property line that fronts along Route 130 (Elon Road). This requirement shall not hinder the property owner's ability to install a driveway and any applicable utilities.

Chairman Bryant opened the public hearing.

No one spoke in favor or opposition to the request; therefore, Chairman Bryant closed the public hearing.

Planning Commission had a discussion regarding the proposal.

Planning Commission Recommendations:

Motion made by Thompson: Motion to recommend approval of Special Exception 2026-189 to the Board of Supervisors with staff recommendations.

Second: Martineau

Motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

6. Non-Public Hearing

A. Ordinance 2026-4

Amending and reenacting the Amherst County Code by amending and reenacting Appendix A, Zoning and Subdivisions, Article VIII, Other Requirements of Zoning Districts, Section 803, Maximum Height Restrictions and Section 804, Minimum Yard Requirements. The purpose of the ordinance is to increase the allowable height of structures to one hundred and twenty-five feet (125') within the M-1, Industrial District, and to provide additional setbacks and regulations.

The Planning Commission at their April 16, 2026, meeting, tabled the ordinance and instructed staff to revise the setback requirements to adjoining properties zoned B-2, General Commercial, and M-1, Industrial.

Mr. Amburgey presented the proposed ordinance.

Planning Commission had a discussion regarding the changes to the ordinance.

Planning Commission Recommendations:

Motion made by Jones: Motion to approve the proposed ordinance.

Second: Bryant

Motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

7. Site Plan Review

A. Site Plan Updates

Mr. Amburgey presented an update regarding the current site plans, erosion and sediment control plans, and subdivisions in the county.

8. Old/New Business

A. Vape Shop Discussion

The Commission received additional information regarding a potential code change to regulate vape shops.

Mr. Creasy informed the Commission that the state code to allow recreational cannabis shops was vetoed by the governor, and presented potential locations where vape shops could be established, ensuring each site is at least one mile away from schools, churches, daycares, and libraries.

Sherriff Ayers introduced drug investigators Derek Tyree and Chase Longhorn. Mr. Tyree and Mr. Longhorn held a presentation on their investigations into vape shops, and the potential harm they can cause.

Planning Commission had a discussion regarding vape shops and directed staff to include medical cannabis shops in the proposed ordinance.

Motion made by Jones: Motion for staff to proceed with drafting a new ordinance for vape shops and medical cannabis shops.

Second: Schjonning

Motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

B. Potential Code Change — Regulation of RV's

The Commission received information regarding a proposed change to regulate the habitation and storage of recreational vehicles (RVs).

Mr. Creasy presented and discussed concerns raised by some citizens regarding the presence of recreational vehicles on properties within the A-1 district with no dwelling.

The Planning Commission had a discussion regarding whether they would direct staff to move forward with drafting an ordinance or not.

The Planning Commission declined to direct staff with drafting an ordinance.

C. Letter From Citizen

Mr. Creasy presented the letter written by Sky Pecot, in which she is asking for the Planning Commission to create a code change for data centers to be changed from "By Right" to requiring a Special Exception permit.

The Planning Commission had a discussion regarding the potential code change for data centers.

Motion made by Jones: Motion to direct staff to research other localities in regard to how they regulate data centers, provide a summary of the JLARC Report, begin drafting an ordinance with special provisions to regulate data centers, and to inform the Board of Supervisors of their intention.

Second: Schjonning

Motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

9. Approval of Minutes

A. April 16th, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Bryant: Motion to table approval of minutes until June meeting, due to lack of quorum.

Second: Schjonning

Motion carried with a 5-0 vote.

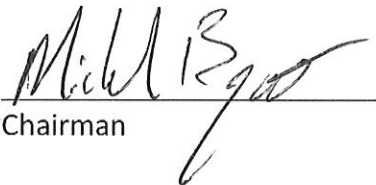
10. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50.

Motion made by Martineau.

Second: Bryant

Motion carried with a 5-0 vote.


Chairman

