



**AMHERST COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING**



MINUTES

June 18, 2026

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

1. Call to Order

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael Martineau, Beverly Jones, Bill Wise, Susan Schjonning, Jim Thompson, Bob Baxter, Chris Adams (Board of Supervisors Liaison), Shelley Hunt (EDA Representative)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Michael Bryant (Chair)

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

Martineau called the meeting to order at 7:03pm.

2. Voting of Temporary Chair

Michael Martineau was voted as temporary chair.

Motion by Thompson: Motion to elect Michael Martineau as temporary chair.

Second: Jones

Motion carried with a 6-0 vote.

3. Invocation & Pledge of Allegiance

Schjonning led the invocation and then the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved with one change.

Change under Old/New Business: Item B. Ordinance 2026-6 Recreational Substance Retailers and Medical Cannabis Dispensing Facilities was swapped with Item C. Ordinance 2026-4 Height Restrictions in M-1 District.

Motion: Jones

Second: Schjonning
Motion carried with a 6-0 vote.

5. Citizens Comments

Kyle Murphy spoke in opposition to data centers, stating that it will take a lot of work to complete, and encouraged the Commission to look into other counties that have data centers.

Jeff Porter spoke in opposition to data centers, with concerns that there has not been enough time to study potential health and environmental effects.

Steve Campbell spoke in opposition to data centers, with concerns about water usage and not knowing long-term effects.

Linden Hoffman spoke in opposition to data centers, with concerns that the current topography could make noise pollution worse, and that companies would bring in outside workers.

Gary Eaton spoke in opposition to data centers, with concerns about the impact on the environment, and that better developments could be built.

Scott Packer spoke in opposition to data centers, with concerns regarding water pollution, and stated that there are no buildings in the M-1 district that could compare to a data center.

Matt Weese spoke in opposition to data centers, with concerns regarding water usage, light pollution, and long-term health.

Joan Klaus spoke in opposition to data centers, stating that the water that is available now is in great condition, and is concerned with potential water pollution and usage.

Johnson Vanderboard spoke in opposition to data centers, with concerns about how power could be brought to the site.

Lisa Jonas spoke with concerns regarding the height restrictions in the M-1 district. She is asking for a case by case review for future developments.

Barbara Pryor spoke in opposition to data centers, with concerns regarding water and air pollution. She also spoke about concerns with Flock cameras and surveillance.

Robin Smith spoke in opposition to data centers. She spoke about how much work it would take to level the topography, and about Loudon County and the changes they have made since having data centers.

Joseph Garrett spoke in opposition to data centers, with concerns regarding harmful chemical

output, and is asking for there to be some regulation on the gas systems.

Charlene Tysver spoke in opposition to data centers, with concerns regarding the long-term effects and how quickly things are moving globally. She is asking for every protection to be had in the ordinance.

Lou Bouquin spoke in opposition to data centers, with concerns regarding environmental impacts, and that locals would have no benefit.

Steve Walthaw spoke in opposition to data centers, and is asking for the BOS to allow a moratorium.

Crystal Morandey spoke in opposition to data centers, with concerns regarding noise pollution, and what impacts that can have on surrounding wildlife.

Ryan Brezanoskis spoke in opposition to data centers, with concerns regarding soil contamination.

6. Old/New Business

A. Ordinance 2026-5 Data Center(s) - Definition Update, Special Exception Classification and Special Provisions

The Commission received information about data centers and the proposed ordinance that updates the definition, reclassifies the use as a special exception, and provides special provisions to ensure public safety, health, and welfare.

Mr. Creasy presented the proposed ordinance and the changes discussed during the workshop.

The Planning Commission had a discussion regarding the changes they would like to be made to the proposed ordinance. The Commission asked staff if they could bring a list of other counties that are similar to Amherst County, and the height restrictions and decibels they allow for data centers.

The Planning Commission instructed staff to make the following changes: add language regarding the "baseline" noise, have a noise study conducted semiannually, have setbacks 500 ft for residential, 100 ft for B-2, and no setbacks for M-1.

Motion made by Jones: Motion to advertise a public hearing for the ordinance with stated changes at the July meeting.

Second: Thompson

Motion carried with a 6-0 vote.

B. Ordinance 2026-6 Recreational Substance Retailers and Medical Cannabis Dispensing Facilities

The Commission received additional information regarding a potential code change to regulate recreational substance retailers (vape shops) and/or medical cannabis dispensing facilities.

Mr. Amburgey presented the proposed ordinance.

The Planning Commission had a discussion regarding the proposed ordinance, and asked staff to place the draft in ordinance form and to bring it to the next meeting as a public hearing.

Motion made by Thompson: Motion for staff to advertise for a public hearing in July.

Second: Schjonning

Motion carried with a 6-0 vote.

C. Ordinance 2026-4 Height Restrictions in M-1 District

The Commission received information regarding the proposed height increase for buildings within the M-1, Industrial zoning district. Staff requested that they table the ordinance.

The Planning Commission had a discussion regarding the proposed ordinance.

Motion made by Thompson: Motion to table until July meeting.

Second: Martineau

Motion carried with a 6-0 vote.

D. Wayside Stand

Staff received a letter from a property owner requesting that the Commission review a possible code change to allow wayside stands on all primary and secondary highways, regardless of parcel zoning.

Mr. Creasy presented the request to the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission had a discussion regarding the request.

Motion made by Thompson: Motion to not move forward with potential code change.

Second: Baxter

Motion carried with a 5-1 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. Approval of Minutes

A. April 16th, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Martineau: Motion to table approval of minutes until July meeting.

Second: Jones

Motion carried with a 6-0 vote.

B. May 21st, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Motion made by Martineau: Motion to table approval of minutes until July meeting.

Second: Jones

Motion carried with a 6-0 vote.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:11pm.

Motion made by Thompson

Second: Jones

Motion carried with a 6-0 vote.


Elected Temporary Chair

