

1 DRAFT

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3 TOWN OF DURHAM
4 DURHAM PLANNING BOARD MEETING

5
6 Wednesday, July 30, 2025

7 Town Council Chambers, Durham Town Hall

8 7:00 pm

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10 MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Rasmussen (Chair), Sally Tobias (Vice Chair), Richard Kelley, Peyton
11 McManus, Robert Sullivan, Gary Whittington, Heather Grant (Council Rep)

12 MEMBERS ABSENT: Munish Nanda (Alternate), Eric Lund (Council Alternate)

13 OTHERS PRESENT: Town Planner Michael Behrendt

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15 I. Call to Order

16 Chair Paul Rasmussen called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

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18 II. Roll Call and Seating of Alternates

19 Chair Rasmussen called the roll.

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21 III. Approval of Agenda

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23 Mr. Kelley *MOVED to approve the Agenda as presented; SECONDED by Mr. McManus;*
24 *APPROVED: 7-0, Motion carries.*

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26 IV. Conservation Subdivision – Zoning Ordinance. Discussion about prospective changes to
27 Article XIX - Conservation Subdivisions.

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29 Chair Rasmussen presented a recap of why the Planning Board is looking to make changes to the
30 Conservation Subdivision portion of the Zoning Ordinance. The hope is to rework it to increase
31 density and to better consider conservation.

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33 H. Open Space

34 Chair Rasmussen would like to see less activity in the open space. There was discussion on the
35 definitions of “active” versus “passive” outdoor recreation uses.

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37 Planner Behrendt suggested they have a professional create a forest management plan. There was
38 discussion on forest management and agricultural uses to be allowed in the open space. There was
39 discussion on whether to include permission to remove dead or diseased trees.

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41 There was discussion of possibly allowing the creation of a “third common space” within the open
42 space for community activities. There was discussion as to whether this third space should be a
43 percentage of the developable area or a percentage of the open space.

There was a recommendation to delete #5 regarding maintenance and stewardship of the open space. Some members felt the first sentence should remain.

I. Front Yard Setbacks

There was discussion on the wording "30 feet whichever is greater" under #1. It was decided to leave that wording as is. It was agreed to remove #3.

J. Side Yard Setbacks

Chair Rasmussen stated that the editing in this section is for verbiage. It was decided to remove all of #3.

K. Streetscape Buffer Adjacent to Existing Public Streets

Chair Rasmussen asked if everyone was ok with getting rid of this section. Mr. Kelley was not. He felt that the Board would get some pushback on that. The people in town like buffers. Chair Rasmussen stated that they had previously had a conversation about quality habitats and quality wildlife corridors, so you don't want to put 50-60 feet of buffer between the main road and the house. Mr. Kelley stated that he isn't against removing this section. He felt that they could wait and see what others thought. Planner Behrendt stated that rather than a buffer, one of the objectives should be to have the development on the internal part of the parcel. Mr. Kelley stated that the buffer could just be whatever the front setback for the Zone is. The decision was to keep this section "K."

K. Affordable Housing (This becomes L now)

Planner Behrendt doesn't believe there should be a mandate for affordable housing, but it would be good to have an incentive. Chair Rasmussen stated they should come back to talk about affordable housing after the talk about density.

175-107.1 Workforce Housing Option

Chair Rasmussen asked if they should leave this section in as it is now, or do they take it out of Conservation Subdivisions. Chair Behrendt felt that it needs to be re-written. Chair Rasmussen stated that this could now just fall under ***L. Affordable Housing***. Planner Behrendt feels that this section is still needed here even though they now have a workforce housing overlay district. There was discussion about potential incentives to motivate developers to build workforce housing.

Planner Behrendt stated that the Board has two big things to decide now: 1. The percentage of open space and 2. Density. He suggested that they discuss the percentage of open space first. Chair Rasmussen suggested that the percentage of open space in the Rural Zone should be 75%. There was discussion on possibly eliminating any formula for density. There was a lengthy discussion on the calculation of density. Planner Behrendt stated that percentage of open space and density are two totally different things, and they need to keep them separate. He feels that the Board has done well setting the open space and uses. Now they just have to agree on density.

V. Other Business

Mr. Kelley asked if there were any interest in getting rid of paper for packet information. Vice Chair Tobias stated that it is an awful lot of waste to have paper. Mr. Kelley stated that his idea is that the Town provides tablets to the Board, and the Board has accounts on the Town server. Mr. McManus stated that he wants to be sure that whatever is digitally saved to the website is the same as the paper packet. He stated that sometimes it is not the same information.

VI. Adjournment

Mr. Kelley moved to adjourn the Planning Board Meeting; SECONDED by Vice Chair Tobias; APPROVED: 7-0, Motion carries.

Chair Rasmussen adjourned the meeting at 9:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Edwards