THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE
NORTH CAROLINA

Planning & Zoning Commission
9/2/2026
DRAFT ACTION MINUTES

These action minutes are intended to provide the reader with an overview of the committee meeting and actions taken during the meeting.

For detailed information on this meeting, please refer to the meeting recording, also located on the commission web page, ashevillenc.gov/pzc, or contact Sam Starr-Baum with any questions.

Present: Chair Geoffrey Barton, Vice-Chair Jason Seickel, Jonathan Anzollitto, Jane Margaret Bell, Lindsay Broughel, Anna Zuevskaya

Absent: Brenton Faircloth.

AGENDA ITEM	ACTION
Planning & Zoning Commission Land Acknowledgement Chair Barton read the PZC Land Acknowledgement: "As we are gathering today as the Planning and Zoning Commission, the body tasked with reviewing and advising on appropriate land use in the city of Asheville, it is fitting to acknowledge the storied history of this land. We occupy the Land of the Cherokee people, who have stewarded and been in relationship with these mountains and waterways from time immemorial. This land is occupied through violence, oppression, coercion, broken treaties, and forced relocation. Please join me in expressing respect and gratitude for the present-day Eastern Band of Cherokee, the Cherokee Nation, the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee, and all of our Indigenous neighbors, as well as the past and present marginalized community members, as we seek to join in the healing of the indelible trauma that is embedded in this land."	
Approval of minutes from the 8/5/2026 meeting	**Motion:** Approval of the minutes from the Aug 5, 2026 meeting, with the corrections noted in the "updates and reports" section. **Motion made by:** Commissioner Vice-Chair Seickel **Motion 2nd by:** Commissioner Anzollitto **Vote:** Motion passes 6-0 (Motion made at 8:45)
Chair Barton noted that there were two areas in the "updates and reports" section from the 8/5 Action Minutes that stated: "PZC Staff" instead of "PZC". Chair Barton requested that any motion include the revisions.	

Updates and Reports

Report on recent legislative and administrative actions: Sam Starr-Baum, Planner III, with the Planning & Urban Design Department, updated the Commission on recent actions taken by City Council on items previously forwarded by the Commission:

- At the 8/25 meeting, City Council has unanimously approved and adopted the zoning text amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), Chapter 7 of the Asheville Code of Ordinances, to eliminate minimum off-street parking requirements, increase the maximum allowed size of accessory dwelling units, and permit duplexes/Townhomes as an allowed primary use in all residential and certain mixed-use zoning districts.
- City Council also approved the split-zone rezoning located at 23 Heritage Drive at the 8/25 council meeting.

Recurring update on Comprehensive Plan & Development Regulations Update project: Will Palmquist, Principal Planner with the Planning & Urban Design Department, noted that authorization to rewrite the Comprehensive Plan and UDO goes to City Council on September 8, 2026, with public engagement scheduled to begin in October or November 2026. Palmquist also noted that the contractor would be revealed at the Thursday, September 3rd Council Agenda Setting Meeting.

Agenda Amendment: a request to add an informal data presentation regarding local lot size metrics and starter home production.	**Motion:** Amended the agenda to include an informal data presentation at the end of the meeting to discuss lot sizes and starter homes. **Motion made by:** Commissioner Anzolitto **Motion 2nd by:** Commissioner Jane Margaret Bell **Vote:** Motion passes 6-0 (Motion made at 29:57)
A request to conditionally rezone the property located at 99999 Tried Street and 990 W Chapel Road from Residential Single Family High Density District (RS-8) and Conditional Zoning (RS-8 CZ) to Single Family High Density District Conditional Zoning (RS-8 CZ).	**Motion:** Approval of the conditional rezoning with the aquatic buffer technical modification **Motion made by:** Commissioner Jane Margaret Bell **Motion 2nd by:** Commissioner Anzollitto **Vote:** Motion passes 6-0 (Motion made at)

Sam Starr-Baum, Urban Planner III with Planning & Urban Design, presented the conditional rezoning for the property located at 99999 Tired Street and W Chapel Rd. The proposed rezoning would allow the existing property to be rezoned from Residential Single Family High Density District (RS-8) and Residential Single Family High Density District Conditional Zoning (RS-8 CZ) to Single Family High Density District Conditional Zoning (RS-8 CZ). Rezoning the property would allow for the development of 23 total lots that would be 100% affordable. The property would include 18 attached/duplex units and 5 detached single-family homes.

The applicant, Will Buie of WGLA Engineering, made a request during the applicant presentation for a technical modification to UDO Section 7-12 to allow for land-disturbing activity within the 30-foot aquatic stream buffer to remove old structures and construct a pedestrian sidewalk. The motion made by Commissioner Bell included the technical modification, and that will be included in technical documents for City Council review.

There was no public comment provided at the meeting. Both the applicant and the commission discussed the letter of support provided by the Shiloh Neighborhood Association. Staff and the commission noted how this

proposal aligned with the Shiloh Community Plan goals for affordable housing and neighborhood character preservation.

Informal data presentation regarding local lot size metrics and starter home production.

Commissioner Anzollitto presented GIS data analyzing single-family housing patterns across Buncombe County and the City of Asheville. The presentation focused on starter homes and lot size and why Asheville could add more starter homes without demolishing any existing homes.

Starter Home Deficit: Commissioner Anzollittio defined starter homes as homes between 800–1,400 sq ft priced under $300,000. Anzollittio also stated that starter homes represent 11% of Asheville's total single-family stock, but only 129 were constructed in the city over the last decade.

Zoning Production Disparities: Commissioner Anzolitto's presentation noted that low-density districts (RS2, RS4) produce virtually no starter homes, whereas RS8 yields the majority. High minimum lot sizes inflate land costs, financially forcing developers to build larger, more expensive homes.

National Benchmarks: Commissioner Anzollitto also referenced the recent zoning updates in Austin, TX (minimum lot sizes reduced to 1,800 sq ft) and Durham, NC (1,250 sq ft per unit density brackets with 5 ft setbacks) as models for reducing land-cost barriers. The presentation also made frequent comparison to Pittsburgh, PA given the lot sizes and geographic terrain challenges.

Following his presentation, the commission was thankful for the presentation. Commissioner Bell and others inquired about next steps for future discussion and action on this matter. The following were provided as next steps:

- September 15 HCD Meeting: Discussion of RS2/RS4 zoning districts and lot size requirements scheduled for the Housing and Community Development Committee.
- City Council Policy Direction: Request short-term prioritization guidance from City Council regarding targeted text amendments vs. full UDO integration.
- Staff Assessment**:** Staff to evaluate feasibility, resource requirements, topography suitability, and alignment with the Comprehensive Plan.

A discussion concerning the Planning and Zoning Commission Annual Report.

Chair Barton started the conversation stating that there was a desire to produce a 2026 Annual PZC report for Council review, and noted that there would be the opportunity to include commission accomplishments and new policy recommendations for further review in 2027.

In listing accomplishments, the commission focused predominantly on Zoning Text Amendments, which included: review threshold changes, eliminating parking minimums, and a slate of missing middle text amendments. The board highlighted the following for policy recommendations and future work for the commission:

- **Hazard & Flood Resilience:** the commission emphasized updating flood development ordinances, disaster evacuation plans, and multi-hazard risk mapping.
- **Infrastructure Barriers:** the discussion highlighted the need for city-led financing (bonds, tax-increment financing) to open unpaved rights-of-way and extend utilities, preventing infrastructure costs from blocking small-scale infill developers.
- **Inter-Agency Data Sharing:** Commissioners Bell, Seikel and Broughel called for tighter coordination between city land-use planning, the French Broad River MPO, and NCDOT to align housing growth with transit investments.

- **Anti-Displacement:** Commissioner Zuevskaya expressed a desire to continue anti-displacement work and the examination of explicit links between land-use policy, affordable housing subsidies, and anti-displacement strategies.
- **Transportation & CIP Coordination:** The commission spoke about improved data sharing between municipal land use approvals and regional transportation agencies (MPO, NCDOT) to better align capital improvement plans with identified pedestrian, road, and transit needs.
- **Economic Development Integration:** Commissioner Broughel discussed city assistance in navigating the permitting process for business development.

The discussion concluded by acknowledging the Chair will collaborate with city staff to draft the annual report incorporating commission feedback for review at the October 7th Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting before submittal to City Council.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.