TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING AND PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2026, 6:00 PM
1500 BLOWING ROCK ROAD

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Dalton George, Mayor Pro Tem Todd Carter, Anitra Ball, Anne Pruitt, Virginia Roseman, and Adrian Tait

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Frank Veno, Myles Harrison, Declan King, David Luther, and Frida Paz-Miranda

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Garrett Kight

PLANNING STAFF PRESENT: Jane Shook-Director of Planning & Inspections, Brandon Wise-Deputy Director of Planning & Inspections, Amy Snider-Zoning Administration Manager, and Brenda Henson-Board Clerk

OTHER TOWN STAFF OR REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Allison Meade-Town Attorney

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Call to Order

Mayor George called the Town Council to order at 6:00 p.m. Chair Veno called the Planning Commission to order at the same time. The meeting was held in the Town Council Chambers at 1500 Blowing Rock Road, Boone.

Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Council Member Pruitt made a motion, seconded by Council Member Roseman, to approve the July 27, 2026, Public Hearing minutes.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0

The motion passed.

Commission Member Paz-Miranda made a motion to approve the July 27, 2026, Public Hearing/Planning Commission meeting minutes with a correction on page 9 of the minutes that would reflect her relaying Jeff Younce's question of whether the development would require widening of the neighborhood roads and where the funding would come from to obtain right-of-way acquisitions. The motion was seconded by Commission Member Harrison.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0
Absent – 1 (Kight)

The motion passed.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Chair Veno called a break from 7:27 p.m. to 7:38 p.m.

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Chair Veno stated that when taking votes, he would like each Planning Commission member to voice their for-or-against vote individually to make it easier for everyone to understand.

Discussion and Recommendation on Case(s) Heard at the Public Hearing

Case A26-0515 Khulaqi Parcel – General Use Zoning Map Amendment

Abdulrahman Yasser Khulaqi has submitted a General Use Zoning Map Amendment application to rezone a portion of the property located on US Hwy 421 S (Watauga County PIN 2920-09-4335-000) from R3 Multiple-Family Residential to B3 General Business with Corridor District Overlay.

Commission Member King stated that he saw no reason the entire parcel should not be zoned B3. Commission Member Paz-Miranda and Chair Veno agreed.

Vote 1

Commission Member Luther made a motion that the proposed amendment to the Town's zoning map is consistent with the Town's current comprehensive plan and any other adopted plan(s) of the Town that are applicable because of the following from Boone Next:

Planning Principle 1: Prioritize thoughtfully designed development of underutilized land within the town's existing built-upon areas over development of undeveloped land on the town's outer limits. It is preferable to accommodate growth in locations within the existing town limits that are appropriate for, can support, and would be enhanced by new development. Infill and redevelopment will occur in a strategic manner that considers community needs like provision of and access to goods, services, transit, and quality public space.

Policy 1.5.3: Guide Growth Using the Growth Management Tiers Map: The Growth Management Tiers Map serves as a guide for development and investment decisions. The map's purpose is to ensure Boone accommodates growth consistent with the Boone Next Planning Principles, intentionally directs growth to desired areas, manages the pace of development, and aims for fiscal balance. This map is intended to be used when considering zoning and development approvals, utility service extensions, annexations, incentives, and capital investments. This map should be used in coordination with the Utility Service and Annexation Criteria. The Growth Management Tiers Map will be updated from time to time to reflect changing planning conditions.

Policy 4.4.1: Promote Use of Existing Resources: Promote infill, redevelopment, and adaptive use as a way to maximize use of existing services, infrastructure, and utilities.

The rezoning would match the walkable mixed-use designation on the Future Land Use Map along the corridor.

Commission Member Harrison seconded the motion.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0
Absent – 1 (Kight)

The motion passed.

Vote 2

Commission Member Luther made a motion, seconded by Commission Member King, that the Planning Commission recommends approval of Ordinance A26-0515 within Staff Report Exhibit A and approval is reasonable and in the public interest because this amendment unifies a split-zoned parcel whose R3 portion cannot be developed on its own since the lot is below the R3 minimum of 20,000 square feet, it

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matches the B3 zoning on the adjoining parcels along a commercial corridor, and the full range of B3 uses is compatible with the neighboring hotel, commercial, and manufacturing uses, with required buffers addressing the apartment to the south.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0
Absent – 1 (Kight)

The motion passed.

Case A26-0521 Clement Street Apartments – Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment

Clement Street Apartments, LLC submitted a Conditional District Zoning Map Amendment application to rezone property at 138 Clement Street (Watauga County PINS 2910-15-2928-000 and 2910-15-2953-000) from B3 General Business to Conditional District R3 Multiple-Family Residential District with a site-specific development plan for Use 1.11 Multi-Family Dwelling (Up to 30 bedrooms). The request is for a 12-unit, 18-bedroom multi-family dwelling.

Commission Member King acknowledged the need for family housing. He noted the discussion regarding bathroom access and renting by the unit. Commission Member King said students pushed people out of housing because split leasing gave them more buying power. He felt that, to give families a better chance of renting these units, conditioning by-the-unit leases would be a better option than trying to dictate the interior layout.

Commission Member Paz-Miranda agreed with Commission Member King, noting that such a condition could allow families and young professionals an opportunity to rent these units.

Commission Member Luther noted that Boone was growing. He also noted that students and fraternities were not protected classes. Commission Member Luther wanted to ensure the Commission did not limit the owner's ability to use the land as needed to maintain a commercial interest, while also not creating a way to rent individual bedrooms. He said he was less concerned that the development would significantly change the neighborhood, noting it would provide a transition from commercial uses to the residential neighborhood. Commission Member Luther said the developer and property manager were local. He felt this was a wonderful project that included ADA units and used an existing building. However, the proposal could use a little bit more work. Commission Member Luther said he would like to see conditions requiring the apartments to be rented by the unit rather than by the bedroom, stormwater mitigation addressed, landscaping installed, and parking situated so cars would not back out onto Clement Street. He asked whether the applicant would install a sidewalk along Clement Street. Mr. Wise replied that the applicant would be required to install a sidewalk.

Commission Member Paz-Miranda asked whether the approval could include conditions requiring the lease to prohibit parties and address trash and noise control.

Commission Member King felt that those items were enforcement issues.

Commission Member Luther asked Ms. Butler what other properties she or her mother managed. Ms. Butler replied that they managed The Brookes on Faculty Street and King Street Apartments on King Street.

Commission Member Luther asked whether the development would have a dumpster. Ms. Butler indicated there would be a dumpster with an enclosure. Commission Member Paz-Miranda asked where the dumpster would be located. Ms. Butler replied that the dumpster location had not been fully mapped out. She did not realize she would be required to submit a full scope of the development at this meeting. Ms. Butler proposed locating the dumpster at the back of the property, straight back from the entrance.

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Commission Member Luther suggested conditions requiring shielded, downward-directed exterior lighting, buffers planted where possible, and preservation of all existing trees. Mr. Wise noted that the UDO required shielding and downward angling of the exterior lighting.

Chair Veno mentioned the bathroom configuration. He did not like the idea of not having a public-access bathroom in certain apartments, preferring one bedroom with its own private bathroom and the other bedroom sharing a common bathroom.

Commission Member Paz-Miranda felt the proposed bedroom/bathroom design was probably the best way to arrange the units without losing square footage in the living spaces. She stated that as long as the unit was rented as a whole, families and young professionals would have more chances to obtain a unit.

Commission Member Harrison noted that while the bathroom configuration might encourage renting by the bedroom, the requirement to rent the unit should alleviate that issue.

Commission Member King did not see the bathroom configuration as an issue, noting that neither Boone Next nor the public commented on that topic.

Ms. Butler said that if the second bathroom had to provide common access, they would probably have to change the units to two bedrooms and one bathroom due to design constraints.

Commission Member Luther said he wasn't particularly concerned about the awkwardness of someone having to go through another person's bedroom to use the bathroom, but was more interested in providing housing opportunities for young professionals or families.

Ms. Butler said it was fairly standard to have two bedrooms and two bathrooms of nearly equal size, whether you were near a college or renting to families. She noted that because of the development's proximity to campus, some students would likely live there, but renting by the unit should help move the town in the direction it was trying to go.

Mr. Wise reminded Commission members that the requested deviation to remove the requirement for a common-access bathroom applied only to the upper-floor two-bedroom units. He noted that the first-floor units were two-bedroom units with one common-access bathroom. Mr. Wise also reminded members that the applicant had to agree to any conditions.

Chair Veno mentioned a stormwater mitigation condition and asked the applicant whether she would accept a condition to install a system. Ms. Butler replied that they could look into it. She explained that the development would not change the existing impervious area, so she was hoping they would not have to install stormwater mitigation. Ms. Butler expressed concern that the system cost could make or break the project.

Commission Members Luther and King felt the Commission lacked enough detail at this meeting to impose a stormwater mitigation condition.

Commission Member Luther did wish to impose a condition to preserve the existing trees. Ms. Butler agreed to that condition.

Commission Member Luther suggested a condition that the four parking spaces along Clement Street be reoriented so that vehicles did not back out into the street.

Jane Shook, Director of Planning & Inspections, suggested the applicant work with Mr. Wise on parking solutions that would eliminate vehicles backing out onto Clement Street while retaining adequate parking and proper locations for solid waste and recycling.

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Chair Veno felt this was a good development plan and liked that it would reuse an existing building. He acknowledged neighborhood concerns that students were loud, partied, and created trash. Chair Veno felt that landlords should be held responsible for their tenants.

Ms. Shook asked the applicant if she would accept a condition that the development would rent by the unit, not by the bedroom. Ms. Butler felt that this condition could be accommodated, if imposed.

Vote 1

Commission Member Luther made a motion that the proposed amendment to the Town's zoning map is consistent with the Town's current comprehensive plan and any other adopted plan(s) of the Town that are applicable because of the following from Boone Next:

Planning Principle 1: Prioritize thoughtfully designed development of underutilized land within the town's existing built-upon areas over development of undeveloped land on the town's outer limits. It is preferable to accommodate growth in locations within the existing town limits that are appropriate for, can support, and would be enhanced by new development. Infill and redevelopment will occur in a strategic manner that considers community needs like provision of and access to goods, services, transit, and quality public space.

Policy 1.2.2: Infill Development Enhances the Town: Infill development is important because it directs growth away from natural areas, but it must be done well. Infill development shall enhance and not detract from the building character of the town by replicating key elements of Boone's cherished historic design features (like building scale, proportion, setbacks, character) with high quality, pedestrian-oriented design and providing public goods like plazas, wide sidewalks, public art, and affordable spaces for living, artists, and small businesses. Rules for new development should avoid financially incentivizing displacement of vulnerable populations.

Policy 1.3.4: Encourage Reuse and Rehabilitation: Support and encourage adaptive reuse and rehabilitation of existing homes and buildings. Where appropriate, minimum building code standards should be applied in a manner compatible with historic preservation efforts.

Policy 4.4.1: Promote Use of Existing Resources: Promote infill, redevelopment, and adaptive use as a way to maximize use of existing services, infrastructure, and utilities.

The development will provide multi-family housing as a primary use in the walkable mixed-use designation.

Commission Member Paz-Miranda wished to amend the motion to add:

Planning Principle 7: Support the town's established neighborhoods and new residential developments through neighborhood-level engagement and planning. Neighborhoods may include a variety of land uses (residential, commercial, civic, and recreational areas), building types, and housing types. They may have an identifiable center that offers basic services such as cafes, childcare, specialty stores, and grocery options. Neighborhoods will support a variety of travel options and be well-connected to adjacent neighborhoods and parks. They will seamlessly integrate the members of diverse, multi-generational communities living in proximity to one another.

Commission Member Luther accepted the amendment.

Commission Member Paz-Miranda seconded the motion.

VOTE: Aye – 5

Nay – 0

Absent – 1 (Kight)

The motion passed.

Vote 2

Commission Member Luther made a motion, seconded by Commission Member King, that the Planning Commission recommends approval of Ordinance A26-0521 within Staff Report Exhibit A and approval is reasonable and in the public interest as an adaptive reuse that adds housing within walking distance of a campus without new impervious surface, and that replaces the full range of B3 commercial uses with a residential use of lower traffic and noise impact, subject to the following conditions:

1. Where there is a conflict between the original application information and the plans (received on June 10, 2026), the plans shall control. Insignificant deviations may be permitted to comply with the requirements of the UDO. For application elements not depicted on the plans but included in the written materials provided by the applicant and considered at the public hearing held on July 27, 2026, those details shall be considered part of the approved plan except as may be specifically provided otherwise in these conditions or was represented otherwise by the applicant at the public hearing.
2. Any commitments and representations concerning the proposed development made by the applicant at the public hearing shall also become a condition of the permit and a basis for a stop work order and/or permit revocation if violated.
3. The applicant shall submit the necessary applications, plans, details, and specifications meeting the requirements of the Town Code, UDO, Building Code, and any other applicable codes for review and approval necessary to issue Zoning and Building Permits.
4. Units shall be leased by the unit, not by the bedroom.
5. Provide parking that does not impede traffic on Clement Street, including those spaces that back into the street.
6. The applicant must work with town staff on a solid waste collection plan that defines the container location and collection access before site plan approval.
7. Existing trees on the site must be retained.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0
Absent – 1 (Kight)

The motion passed.

Other Matters

Planning Commission Vice-Chair

Commission Member King nominated Frank Veno as the Planning Commission Chair. Commission Member Luther seconded the nomination.

VOTE: Aye – 5
Nay – 0
Absent – 1 (Kight)

The motion passed.

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Commission Members Paz-Miranda and King applied for the Vice-Chair position and provided brief statements regarding their desire to hold the office. Commission members struggled to choose between the two candidates.

Commission Member Luther nominated Frida Paz-Miranda as the Planning Commission Vice-Chair. Chair Veno asked if there were any other nominations. Commission Member King nominated himself as Vice-Chair.

VOTE FOR PAZ-MIRANDA: Aye – 4
Nay – 0
Abstain – 1 (Paz-Miranda)
Absent – 1 (Kight)

The motion passed.

VOTE FOR KING: Aye – 4
Nay – 0
Abstain – (King)
Absent – 1 (Kight)

The motion passed.

Ms. Shook explained that the nominations would be forwarded to Town Council for their final selection of Chair and Vice-Chair.

Website

Ms. Shook announced that the town's website would include a form allowing the public to email Planning Commission members. She explained that the emails would go to members' personal email addresses, which would not be shown on the website. If members chose to reply by email, their personal email address would then be visible to the recipient. Ms. Shook reminded Commission members that they could only speak for themselves in any email response and could not act on behalf of the Commission.

Mr. Wise noted that the October meeting would likely be a Planning Commission meeting without Town Council present. If Commission members felt the need to discuss the contact form further, they could do so at the October meeting.

Adjournment of Planning Commission

With nothing further, Chair Veno adjourned the meeting at 8:46 p.m.

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Frank Veno, Planning Commission Chair Brenda Henson, Board Clerk

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