MINUTES
BREVARD PLANNING BOARD
April 8th, 2026
COUNCIL CHAMBERS CITY HALL

The Brevard Planning Board met for a regular meeting Tuesday, April 8th, 2026, at 5:30 PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Members' Present:	Greg Hunter, Chair Michael Hinds Peter Chaveas Jerry Yunker Alan Mercaldo
Members' Absent:	Karen Darity Reid Wood
Staff Present:	Paul Ray, Planning Director Emily Brewer, Senior Planner Aaron Bland, Assistant Planning Director Vith Gass, Board Clerk

I. Welcome

At 5:31PM, Greg Hunter, Chair, called the meeting to order.

II. Introduction of Planning Board Members

The Board introduced themselves.

III. Certification of Quorum

G. Hunter confirmed with the Board Clerk that a quorum from the Board was present.

IV. Approval of Agenda

A. Mercaldo made a motion to approve the agenda. M. Hinds seconded, unanimously carried.

V. Approval of Minutes

P. Chaveas motioned to approve the March minutes. J. Yunker, second, passed unanimously.

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VI. Public Comments

Amanda Laroue (Welcome St.)

A. Laroue opposed a city-initiated rezoning of Welcome Street to neighborhood mixed-use, highlighting that a limited request from one resident was inappropriately expanded to the entire street without neighbor consultation. Representing residents, Laroue cited concerns regarding the street's inability to handle commercial traffic, criticized the lack of transparency, and formally requested council denial to protect the area's quiet, residential nature.

A. Laroue noted that she possessed a petition opposing the rezoning signed by all property owners on Welcome Street. The Board instructed her to submit a copy of the petition to the Board Clerk at the conclusion of the meeting for the official record.

VII. Unfinished Business

a. TXT-26-0003 Nonconformities Amendment

Background: In North Carolina, nonconformities (often referred to as “nonconforming uses, structures, or lots") are governed primarily by NCGS Chapter 160D, which establishes the framework for local land development regulation. Under this statute, nonconformities are generally allowed to continue even if they do not comply with current zoning regulations, recognizing vested property rights. However, local governments are authorized to adopt ordinances that limit the expansion, enlargement, or intensification of these nonconforming situations, and may require compliance when substantial improvements, reconstruction, or changes in use occur. This law intends to balance the protection of existing property rights with the public interest in gradually bringing development into conformity with adopted plans and regulations. As land becomes scarcer, redevelopment and densification of existing properties continue to occur more and more. Amending this chapter will have significant ramifications for our community - it is vital that redevelopment occurs in a way that benefits the community as a whole and is fair to the property owners.

This is a staff-initiated text amendment to rewrite the City's requirements for nonconformities, specifically Chapter 14. The goals of these regulations are to:

1. Limit substantial investment in nonconformities

2. Bring about eventual elimination and/or lessen their impact on surroundings

3. Preserve the integrity of the ordinance and the character of the city

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At the March meeting, Staff shared an overview of the challenges with nonconformities and proposed ideas with Planning Board for discussion prior to a review of the ordinance language.

E. Brewer opened the presentation by framing it as a follow-up to previous, in-depth discussions on non-conformities, highlighting their legal and administrative impacts, as well as opportunities for improvement. She noted that the staff report mirrors these prior discussions before briefly outlining the proposed approaches for bringing properties into compliance. The Board may reference the official Agenda Packet for the full context of this report.

Non-Conforming Uses. E. Brewer outlined the proposed updates to the non-conforming regulations, which differentiate rules based on the type of non-conformity and modify compliance thresholds. Regarding non-conforming uses, she stated that expansion remains prohibited with a new exception for low-density residential properties, including single-family homes, duplexes, triplexes, and quadraplexes. Additionally, the proposal restricts increases in operational intensity, such as extended hours, additional employees, or higher traffic generation. She clarified that any non-conforming use abandoned for 180 days or more cannot be reestablished, and once a property converts to a conforming use, it cannot revert to its previous status.

She added that the proposed regulations for non-conforming uses align with the current ordinance, with the primary modification being the addition of duplexes, triplexes, and quadraplexes to the residential exemption list, which previously only applied to single-family homes.

Non-Conforming Structure. Regarding non-conforming structures, E. Brewer noted that enlargements are permissible provided they comply with current regulations and do not increase the "degree of non-conformity." Acknowledging that staff previously struggled to enforce this vague standard, she explained that the new text incorporates explicit examples and explanatory graphics. For instance, a structure encroaching on a front-yard setback may be expanded elsewhere on the lot, but it is strictly prohibited from expanding further into the setback area.

E. Brewer noted that the goal of these changes is to provide a much clearer application process, eliminate existing confusion, and establish distinct expectations for all parties involved.

Casualty Damage Regulations. E. Brewer detailed the proposed casualty and disaster recovery regulations. Under the new text, if a non-conforming structure is damaged by an accident or natural disaster, owners may replace the damaged elements provided the damage constitutes less than 50% of the structure's total replacement value and

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work commences within 180 days. E. Brewer clarified that if the 180-day window is missing, or if the damage exceeds the 50% threshold, the property owner is legally required to rebuild the entire structure in full compliance with current zoning standards rather than reproducing the non-conformity.

Non-conforming Lots. E. Brewer continued her report by addressing non-conforming lots, which the city ordinance defines as parcels with insufficient road frontage. She noted that while a legally existing non-conforming lot may still be developed, development is prohibited if the parcel can be combined with an adjacent lot to resolve the non-conformity. She emphasized that while this concept exists in the current ordinance, the updated language provides significant administrative clarity for staff and applicants.

Administrative Authority for Public Safety. E. Brewer emphasized that the proposed language explicitly retains the zoning administrator's authority to mandate site corrections to safeguard public health and safety. As an example, she noted that staff would maintain the power to require the closure of an excess or hazardous driveway. She stated that preserving this discretionary authority is vital for making necessary safety interventions during the development review process.

Compliance Thresholds and Redevelopment Trigger. E. Brewer presented a proposed hybrid approach to determine when redevelopment triggers full or incremental property upgrades. Under this model, full compliance is triggered by the construction of a new principal building or when additions and improvements exceed a specific percentage threshold. Brewer noted that the proposed text sets this threshold at 75%, an increase from the current ordinance standard of 66%. She reminded the Board that they had previously recommended 75%, but the City Council had subsequently lowered it; however, staff is bringing the 75% threshold back for reconsideration now that the non-conformity chapter has been holistically restructured. For projects falling below this major threshold, the proposal replaces the existing strictly monetary investment calculation with a scale-based incremental compliance model. Under this system, necessary upgrades are triggered proportionally by the physical impact and scale of the improvements. For example, while full compliance remains mandatory for new construction, an expansion of a building by 25% or a parking lot by 50% would reasonably trigger specific requirements to upgrade buffers and screening based on the increased intensity of the site.

E. Brewer stated that the overarching purpose of the amendment is to establish equity, regulatory clarity, and a framework for gradual site improvements. She explained that the proposed incremental thresholds rely on the legal principle of a "rational nexus." By ensuring a direct, logical connection between the scale of a development project and the

DRAFT

required upgrades, the city avoids imposing disproportionate or financially unreasonable compliance burdens on property owners.

Policy Analysis. E. Brewer provided a brief policy analysis, noting that while non-conformities are not explicitly addressed in the city's current comprehensive plans and policies, the proposed text is neither consistent nor inconsistent. However, she emphasized that managing non-conformities to encourage gradual compliance, while preserving the integrity of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), inherently furthers the city's broader planning goals and objectives.

Board Action Options. In conclusion, E. Brewer offered to answer questions or review specific text elements. She reminded the Board that their role is to provide a recommendation to the City Council. She outlined their available actions: recommending adoption of the amendment as written, recommending adoption with Board revisions, recommending rejection, or tabling the matter for further consideration. She noted that a draft statement of consistency and reasonableness was included in the agenda packet for their consideration.

A. Mercaldo criticized complex zoning regulations for making development projects financially unfeasible and overwhelming the Board of Adjustment with frequent variance requests. He questioned whether restricting non-conforming properties defeats the true purpose of zoning consistency.

E. Brewer validated A. Mercaldo's observations, confirming that staff frequently encounter property owners frustrated by current redevelopment triggers. She explained that the existing ordinance relies strictly on building value percentages: investments of 25% trigger partial compliance, while investments of 50% or higher mandate full site compliance. E. Brewer noted that this financial model creates severe hardships for owners seeking minor upgrades. Because older structures often have low assessed values, small renovations inadvertently force owners to bring the entire site—including parking lots, landscape buffers, and lighting—into compliance. As a practical example, she cited a local gas station seeking to add a commercial kitchen; under current rules, the low valuation of the building would legally force the owner to budget for unexpected, cost-prohibitive overhauls to the entire parking lot and adjacent sidewalks.

E. Brewer explained that the proposed hybrid framework balances heavy redevelopments with minor property upgrades. While large-scale projects mandate full site compliance, smaller renovations trigger proportional, impact-based updates—such as requiring parking lot screening and buffer expansions only if the physical parking lot footprint is expanded.

DRAFT

E. Brewer explained that the hybrid framework uses a "rational nexus" to ensure regulatory consistency without placing excessive financial burdens on minor projects. Under this equitable approach, logical justification governs upgrades, meaning a minor interior remodel will no longer trigger unrelated, costly infrastructure overhauls like installing new sidewalks or re-paving a parking lot.

A. Mercaldo expressed strong support for the hybrid model, endorsing increased administrative latitude and subjective discretion for staff when evaluating project impacts. He reasoned that over-documenting regulations and establishing rigid, exhaustive codes inadvertently create additional bureaucratic obstacles for applicants attempting to navigate the system.

E. Brewer agreed and provided a follow-up clarification, noting that while staff appreciates the vote of confidence regarding administrative latitude, the new framework intentionally relies on objective criteria rather than subjective discretion. She emphasized that the goal of using a scale-based approach (such as a 25% building expansion triggering buffer upgrades) is to ensure a predictable, mathematical standard. This objective threshold protects applicants from arbitrary enforcement while still providing the common-sense, proportional fairness discussed.

A. Mercaldo questioned the discrepancy between high market-based property tax assessments and low building valuations used for zoning compliance, which can trigger mandatory upgrade costs. E. Brewer confirmed that while the city defaults on the recorded building value for zoning thresholds, property owners may submit a private, certified appraisal to establish a higher market value for their property.

E. Brewer clarified that the proposed "replacement value" definition allows applicants to submit an independent appraisal to contest low county tax valuations. Additionally, the new framework explicitly excludes normal maintenance, safety upgrades, and ADA accessibility modifications from compliance cost calculations, ensuring vital investments are not penalized by development thresholds.

J. Yunker requested clarification regarding the retention of a cost-percentage model as a single trigger within the proposed framework. E. Brewer confirmed that a cost-percentage threshold remains the sole mechanism used to mandate 100% full site compliance.

J. Yunker confirmed that the proposed amendment creates a stepwise compliance model, which E. Brewer clarified mandates proportional, isolated upgrades based on specific expansion thresholds—such as requiring parking lot screening for a small footprint expansion—rather than triggering a total, costly site reconstruction.

DRAFT

J. Yunker asked if there would be an easy compliance guide or model that people can look up themselves. He mentioned that he completely gets what staff is dealing with—historically, as soon as property owners hear about complicated percentage rules, they just assume it's not worth the trouble and walk away. He wants to make sure there is a clear tool available so people can see exactly how the rules apply to them.

A. Bland noted that moving non-conforming triggers into individual chapters prevents developers from being blindsided by surprise requirements, such as sidewalk installations, that were previously hidden in other code sections. J. Yunker concurred, emphasizing that this change ensures developers see compliance requirements earlier in the planning process.

E. Brewer emphasized that the core intent of the amendment is to establish a fair, consistent, and commensurate regulatory framework. Rather than penalizing property owners for making routine building improvements, the updated ordinance directly links compliance requirements to the specific scope of the private development and its subsequent neighborhood impacts.

M. Hinds interpreted the framework as a strategic method to segment non-conformities and systematically transition properties into compliance over time. While noting that complete conformity remains an ongoing challenge due to the town's historical development, his independent research validated staff efforts to clean up and clarify legacy zoning data.

E. Brewer concluded that the ordinance aims to facilitate gradual compliance by blocking heavy investments into outdated structures while offering the administrative flexibility needed for modern expansions. She clarified that the strategy permits low-impact improvements but strictly mandates full site compliance once specific development or investment thresholds are crossed.

Chairman G. Hunter thanked E. Brewer for her comprehensive report and presentation to the Board.

M. Hinds moved to recommend approval of the proposed non-conformity code amendment for City Council consideration, incorporating the statement of consistency and reasonableness as presented. The motion was seconded by P. Chaveas and passed unanimously

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VIII. New Business

a. REZ-26-0001 – Welcome St. Rezoning

A. Bland presented her staff report, a portion of which follows:

> Background: The Planning Department has received an application for a zoning map amendment for 123, 133, 141, and 149 Welcome Street. These four properties are currently zoned Neighborhood Mixed Use (NMX) and the request is to rezone to the Residential Mixed Use (RMX) base district.
>
> Discussion: A. Bland believes that the RMX district is appropriate for the Applicant's four parcels. The parcels are small and do not constitute enough acreage together (0.6 acres) to be an attractive site for a multifamily development. Rezoning to RMX would allow the development of single-family detached houses on the parcels, which are not allowed in NMX, increasing the housing supply in an infill area with access to utilities.
>
> Further, A. Bland also believes the RMX district is well suited for the parcels on the other side of Welcome Street. Therefore, Staff recommends including these four parcels, totaling approximately 3.5 acres, in the rezoning. These parcels are all currently zoned General Residential - 8 (GR8) and each has an existing house; these houses would not become nonconforming if rezoned to RMX.
>
> In order to give the Board and City Council the option to rezone the enlarged area, Staff has advertised this rezoning for all eight parcels. Letters were sent to the four additional parcels on the north side of the street inviting them to the Planning Board meeting and the City Council public hearing.

Following the delivery of the staff report, A. Bland concluded his presentation and opened the floor to answer any questions from the Board.

P. Chaveas and Chairman G. Hunter sought clarification on neighborhood mapping and zoning details. A. Bland confirmed that a construction project on the southern side of the property is a single-family development, corrected the record to note that all four parcels on the north side of Welcome Street contain existing homes, and verified that the corner parcel at Welcome Street and Ecusta Road is a conditional zoning district within the Davidson River Village development.

DRAFT

A. Mercaldo inquired whether the city's Future Land Use map utilizes Welcome Street as a formal boundary line separating two distinct zoning classifications. A. Bland confirmed that the street serves as a dividing marker, detailing that the land to the south is designated as an Urban Corridor classification, while the land to the north sits within a Traditional Neighborhood classification.

Chairman G. Hunter sought to clarify whether Welcome Street physically connects through to the adjacent church property. A. Bland confirmed the connection, directing the Board's attention to the map metrics. He noted that the hatching to the west of the applicant properties indicates a small vehicular exit that directly links the terminus of Welcome Street to the church parking lot.

M. Hinds questioned if rezoning the northern side of the street to Residential Mixed-Use (RMX) would increase density from 32 units to the 50s. A. Bland corrected the baseline figures, clarifying that the current General Residential Extended (GRE) zoning allows 8 units per acre (maximum 28 units), and the RMX transition would allow 15 units per acre (maximum 52 units), effectively doubling the density limit.

M. Hinds inquired about the selection rationale for these rezoning areas, which A. Bland explained aligns with staff efforts to find up-zoning opportunities outside of floodplains and next to existing utilities. P. Chaveas questioned the current urgency, and Bland confirmed there was none, noting that future owners could request up-zoning at a later date.

M. Hinds raised concerns over a lack of public support, arguing that upzoning for dense housing was excessive despite a sensible single-family plan on the south side. A. Bland corrected a misconception, clarifying that duplexes and triplexes are already allowed under current GRE zoning, but the proposed RMX classification is required to permit developments exceeding four units per building.

A. Mercaldo inquired about the acreage of the first three northern lots and how density is calculated for sub-acre parcels when the limit is eight units per acre. A. Bland clarified that two lots are one-third of an acre, one is a half-acre, and the largest is 2.2 acres, explaining that density is calculated proportionally by multiplying the maximum rate by the exact acreage—meaning a half-acre lot is permitted up to four units.

M. Hinds expressed that expanding the rezoning without neighborhood input was premature, urging staff to conduct further outreach and let future property buyers request upzoning on their own terms. A. Mercaldo agreed, noting that extending the zone northward constituted an unrequested expansion that conflicted with the future land use plan. Both

DRAFT

members voiced support for the south side application but opposed the unrequested northern expansion.

G. Hunter questioned whether the neighboring church responded to the proposal, and A. Bland clarified that the church received a standard notice while northern owners received expanded notices regarding the city's portion of the rezoning. J. Yunker and Bland confirmed that despite the Residential Mixed-Use (RMX) transition acting as a down-zone with larger setbacks, the 0.15-acre northern lots still maintain adequate frontage to accommodate single-family homes.

M. Hinds made a motion to approve the south side rezoning request and its accompanying consistency statement. A. Bland noted that the consistency statement would be amended to strike the bullet point regarding upzoning potential, leaving the remaining factual findings intact. The motion was seconded by P. Chaveas and carried unanimously.

b. TXT-26-0002 – Data Center Text Amendment

A. Bland opened the presentation by stating that following City Council's February 16 direction to assess the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) regulations for high-impact digital infrastructure, staff found the existing language insufficient. Consequently, Council enacted a temporary moratorium on March 16 for data centers, crypto mining, and server farms. Because this moratorium expires on July 2, staff initiated the proposed UDO amendment to establish specific land-use regulations for these facilities before the deadline.

A. Bland delivered the staff report. An excerpt of the presentation follows:

> Background: At the February 16, 2026, City Council meeting, Council asked Staff to look into the adequacy of the city's zoning regulations regarding data centers. If inadequate, they also asked Staff to look into the legal steps necessary to impose a moratorium on data center development.
>
> After considering the current text of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), Staff recommended updates to the code to more specifically govern the presence of data centers and similar high-intensity land uses. To provide Staff time to make these changes, City Council adopted Ordinance No. 2026-11 on March 16, 2026, enacting a "temporary moratorium on the acceptance, processing, and approval of any application for data centers, crypto mining facilities, server farms, or other high-impact digital infrastructure facilities." The moratorium expires on July 2, 2026.

DRAFT

This is a staff-initiated text amendment that adds a new specific land use to the Brevard UDO for data centers and similar facilities.

Discussion: Data centers are physical facilities or buildings that house critical computing and networking infrastructure, including servers, storage systems, and related equipment, to store process, and manage data and applications. They are typically large square footage and involve significant demands on electrical and water infrastructure. They are a relatively new type of land use.

Under the current UDO language, data centers would be considered a "Heavy Manufacturing" facility and subject to the rules governing such uses. Heavy Manufacturing is permitted only in General Industrial and requires a Special Use Permit granted by the Board of Adjustment. Staff believe that the UDO as written provides some safeguards against the negative aspects of data centers via the BOA's ability to impose conditions on SUPs. However, data centers are not mentioned specifically in the UDO, and they are not "manufacturing" in the traditional sense, creating confusion and potential shortfalls in ensuring community compatibility of these facilities.

By adding these uses as a specific land use, the UDO will be clearer in addressing this high-impact use, and the City will have greater control in regulating them and ensuring minimal negative impacts on surrounding properties. In the amendments, Staff are proposing a new land use definition and allowing the use only in the General Industrial zoning district as a part of a conditional zoning district (CZD). By limiting the use of a CZD, the City will have full flexibility to adequately regulate and mitigate impacts on surrounding properties on a case-by-case basis, without the potential limitations of "one size fits all" regulations.

A. Bland reminded the board that their role is to provide a recommendation, noting that a consistency statement was included for review. He explained that while the comprehensive land-use plan does not explicitly address these facilities, the proposal aligns with overarching goals seven and eight regarding economic vitality, sustainable industry, and resilient infrastructure.

P. Chaveas questioned if the amendment was reactive or proactive. A. Bland clarified it is a proactive measure sparked by the town of Canton’s recent moratorium on its former paper mill site, which prompted Council members to secure their own unregulated old mill site despite having no active data center proposals.

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M. Hinds questioned the core purpose and rapid timing of enacting a moratorium only to immediately introduce a new regulatory plan. A. Bland clarified that the Town Council acted out of concern that a developer could secure permits with zero specific oversight under the outdated UDO, noting that moratoriums legally require a fixed end date. P. Ray expanded on this, explaining that Council's primary concern was preventing a developer from establishing a vested right by applying for a project in a jurisdiction completely unprepared for high-impact digital facilities.

M. Hinds opposed the ordinance, arguing it needlessly deters data center development and economic opportunities when existing zoning already provides sufficient city oversight. He noted that because Duke Energy must seek approval from the North Carolina Utilities Commission for large infrastructure projects, local leadership—including the Mayor and Council—already holds a formal platform to intervene and provide feedback on proposed developments.

P. Ray clarified that, based on discussions with the City Manager, the intent is not to outright reject data centers, but to ensure City Council thoroughly evaluates all aspects of the industry. He noted that future technological advancements might reduce the facilities' water usage, noise levels, and land footprints, while potentially increasing employment. He emphasized that the proposed measure is designed to maintain a dialogue and keep opportunities open for Council's ultimate consideration.

M. Hinds stated that the proposed ordinance creates a roadblock that will drive developers to less restrictive jurisdictions. He concluded that the city's existing framework already provides ample opportunity for oversight without these new rules.

G. Hunter noted that a developer might apply for vested rights simply to secure the land use without even approaching Duke Energy. He explained that they could then hold onto that right until technological advancements or market shifts make the project more feasible.

A. Mercaldo suggested categorizing data centers under General Industrial zoning with a conditional requirement to address council concerns before the moratorium expires. A. Bland responded that the city must first designate an applicable zoning district, outlining the four available regulatory options: permitting by right with no restrictions, permitting by right with specific development standards, requiring a Special Use Permit, or establishing a Conditional Zoning District.

A. Bland added that a conditional district framework gives the Town Council maximum flexibility to evaluate an application's size, location, and footprint impacts on a case-by-case basis. He noted that the city's available industrial land is severely limited, identifying the

Ecusta Mill, jail, Railroad Avenue/Whitmire, and airport areas as the only remaining industrial zones, none of which can accommodate large-scale development.

G. Hunter questioned the consistency of M. Hinds' position, noting that he argued against the proposed regulation while simultaneously stating that data centers are inappropriate for the city. M. Hinds clarified that his opposition specifically applied to large-scale data centers. A. Mercaldo agreed that such facilities do not suit the city, reiterating that they directly conflict with municipal initiatives to increase density.

P. Ray noted that County Economic Development opposed an outright ban on data centers, preferring instead to leave the door open to future opportunities. He added that the department supported utilizing a conditional zoning district approach to manage the facilities.

G. Hunter concluded that because rapidly evolving technology prevents the town from anticipating future infrastructure shifts, a conditional zoning district is the only practical approach, though Brevard's limited land footprint makes a near-future data center proposal unlikely.

M. Hinds moved to approve the amendment, subject to modifying the text to remove the Section B-2 zoning designation from page 82, creating a clear definition, establishing specific limitations for General Industrial conditional zoning, and ensuring full consistency with the conditional zoning requirements under the UDO. J. Yunker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board approved the Data Center Text Amendment by a majority vote of 3-2. Board Members M. Hinds and A. Mercaldo voted against the motion.

c. REZ-26-0002 - → Pisgah Gateway

A. Bland opened the presentation by introducing a new map amendment request for a PGX rezoning, noting its connection to a previous zoning action voted on by the council in January.

> Background: In November of 2025 the Board discussed and recommended favorably the rezoning of multiple parcels to the new Pisgah Gateway Mixed-Use zoning district (PGX). City Council enacted the rezoning on January 5, 2026. The Board and Council both indicated a desire for Staff to continue soliciting property owners to voluntarily rezone to PGX. Since that time, the owners of the Hub bike shop have expressed a desire to also be rezoned to PGX. Discussion The applicant,

Ogeechee Davidson LLC, owns two parcels and has applied to rezone both to the PGX district. The 1.7-acre parcel which contains the Hub bike shop is currently zoned Downtown Mixed Use and is located at 11 Mamas Place. The adjacent 113 Mamas Place is 7.1 acres and split zoned between Residential Mixed Use and General Residential - 4; there is an old house on this property, but it is largely undeveloped. The applicant wishes to rezone the entirety of both parcels to PGX.

Discussion: The applicant, Ogeechee Davidson LLC, owns two parcels and has applied to rezone both to the PGX district. The 1.7-acre parcel which contains the Hub bike shop is currently zoned Downtown Mixed Use and is located at 11 Mamas Place. The adjacent 113 Mamas Place is 7.1 acres and split zoned between Residential Mixed Use and General Residential - 4; there is an old house on this property, but it is largely undeveloped. The applicant wishes to rezone the entirety of both parcels to PGX.

Following the presentation of the staff report, A. Bland clarified that the requested Pisgah Gateway Mixed Use (PGX) classification complies with the city's 2030 Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Future Land Use Map, noting that the subject properties are situated entirely within the designated Pisgah Gateway Character Area. He also added that the planning department intends to continue identifying and contacting local property owners who qualify for the PGx district to bring forward additional rezoning proposals in the coming months.

G. Hunter thanked A. Bland for the staff report. A. Mercaldo commented that the inclusion of these properties into the Pisgah Gateway Mixed-Use (PGX) district aligns precisely with the board's original intent for the gateway area.

A. Mercaldo inquired whether the historic homes referenced in the report carry a formal historic designation under the PGx district guidelines. A. Bland clarified that while the structures are old, they do not hold an official historic preservation designation, adding that historical status is separate from the immediate zoning classification under consideration.

Board Member A. Mercaldo inquired if the proposed PGX classification would create nonconformity issues for "The Hub," to which A. Bland responded that the zoning change is advantageous for both short- and long-term development plans. Unifying the properties under a single PGX district will eliminate the current burden of managing three distinct zoning districts across two parcels and streamline future development.

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A. Bland reported that applicants intend to expand "The Hub" in the short term, with long-term plans to develop lodging on the rear parcel centered around a historic structure. Commissioner J. Yunker questioned the benefits of the proposed PGX classification for the future lodging project.

Seeing that there were no further discussion or questions, A. Mercaldo made a motion to recommend approval of the rezoning request, finding it consistent with the city's adopted planning documents and referencing the statement of consistency. The motion was seconded by P. Chaveas and passed unanimously.

IX. Final Remarks

Chair G. Hunter thanked M. Hinds for the educational presentation. M. Hinds agreed with A. Mercaldo that public reactions to development can be premature, clarifying that the project's true intent is to support micro-level businesses and local job creation rather than introducing a large-scale, negative footprint.

A. Bland noted that while the county lacks a broad economic alliance, the Transylvania Economic Alliance actively pursues several specific industries. G. Hunter identified outdoor manufacturing as a primary focus, and Bland added that other county target sectors include biotechnology, outdoor gear development, niche and advanced manufacturing, professional services, and healthcare systems.

Board Members A. Mercaldo and M. Hinds thanked the assembly and apologized for the length of their passionate remarks, which Chair G. Hunter reassured them was entirely appropriate for the planning board forum.

X. Adjournment

The meeting concluded following a motion to adjourn from P. Chaveas, which was seconded by J. Yunker. The board voted unanimously to end the session, and the meeting officially adjourned at 6:41 PM.

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Greg Hunter, Chair

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Edievith Gass, Board Clerk

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