MINUTES
BREVARD PLANNING BOARD
August 25th, 2026
COUNCIL CHAMBERS CITY HALL

The Brevard Planning Board met for a regular meeting Tuesday, August 25th, 2026, at 5:30 PM in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Members' Present:	Greg Hunter, Chair Reid Wood Jerry Yunker Alan Mercaldo Michael Hinds Peter Chaveas
Members' Absent:	Karen Darity
Staff Present:	Emily Brewer, Senior Planner Paul Ray, Planning Director Stephanie Holland, Planner 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

R. Wood made a motion to approve the agenda. M. Hinds seconded, unanimously carried.

V. Approval of Minutes

A. Mercaldo motioned to approve the June minutes. R. Wood, second, passed unanimously.

VI. Public Comments

None.

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VII. Unfinished Business

None.

VIII. New Business

a. TXT-26-0007 Building Height – Cont.

E. Brewer, Senior Planner, provided a follow-up presentation on building height regulations from the June meeting.

Background
Building height regulations are a balancing act between protecting community character and scale and promoting appropriate density and development. Building height can have a significant effect on the character of the City's neighborhoods, commercial areas, and downtown, but overly restrictive height standards can also limit housing opportunities, constrain redevelopment, and result in greater site disturbance when development is forced to spread horizontally rather than vertically.

The existing regulations measure building height from the highest adjacent grade to the eave of the roof. This can result in buildings that technically comply with the maximum height standards while still presenting substantial exposed walls, especially on sloping sites. The proposed amendments address this issue by using a combination of story height, overall building height and exposed wall height.

E. Brewer highlighted the role of height regulations in protecting community character and scale while balancing density and development goals. Brewer then introduced a staff-initiated text amendment designed to improve predictability and context-sensitivity, noting that the amendment aims to distinguish between smaller and taller buildings while addressing building scale, visual bulk, and developments on sloping sites.

Proposed Building Height Regulations: The proposed framework outlines two distinct regulatory approaches based on building height. For structures with one or two stories, the regulations will dictate a maximum number of stories alongside a standard story height of 14 feet. For structures with three or more stories, a separate approach will apply. Additionally, Brewer defined what constitutes a "story" and explained the classification criteria for basements and attics.

A. Mercaldo verified that the regulations apply regardless of slope considerations. In response to an inquiry from G. Hunter regarding measuring points for vaulted or open-story rooflines, E. Brewer explained that the calculation uses the midpoint of the roof slope.

Additionally, Brewer clarified for Mercaldo that attics are considered distinct stories if they measure more than six feet.

Building Height Measurement: E. Brewer emphasized the need to differentiate between building height and exposed wall height. She then detailed how the average finished grade is calculated to measure overall building height.

Exposed Wall Height and Stepped-Back Structures: E. Brewer detailed a new provision for terraced or stepped-back structures. Under this rule, the exposed wall height may be measured from the lower roofline, provided the step-back distance is a minimum of four feet.

A. Mercaldo inquired about the technical basis for the proposed four-foot setback. S. Holland explained that the four-foot requirement resulted from testing multiple mass scenarios to balance design flexibility with administrative simplicity. She noted that this fixed number allows for architectural variations—such as a two-story base stepped back for an additional two stories—without relying on a complex, variable ratio based on changing tier heights. Furthermore, S. Holland clarified that a four-foot setback aligns with traditional urban sky-exposure planes to ensure street-level solar access; when paired with the 14-foot maximum floor-to-floor height, it achieves a practical 1:3 proportion that municipal staff can easily administer.

E. Brewer clarified that compliance documentation requirements scale dynamically with the height of the proposed building. Two-story developments are exempt from exhaustive submissions due to their low complexity; however, applicants for structures with three or more stories bear the legal burden of proof and must submit comprehensive evidentiary materials. Brewer expressed that the municipality maintains the authority to require detailed building elevations to ensure full adherence to code parameters.

Towers and Cupolas: E. Brewer noted that she included specific sections of Chapter Five for clarity, even though no changes are being proposed to the existing text. She explained that the intent is simply to acknowledge that towers and cupolas are permitted to exceed the maximum building height. Specifically, towers may extend 20 feet and cupolas up to 10 feet beyond the standard height limit. While this remains consistent with current policy, she emphasized that it is an important existing parameter for the team and applicants to keep in mind.

M. Hinds inquired about ADA compliance, and E. Brewer confirmed that the proposed provision does not negatively impact handicap accessibility. S. Holland clarified that universal accessibility requirements must be met regardless of this specific standard. Instead, Holland explained that this measure was introduced to establish a baseline of

privacy for multifamily units, specifically by elevating windows to prevent direct lines of sight from the street level.

Finally, E. Brewer proposed eliminating the independent building height calculation from the steep slope ordinance. She explained that the newly updated, context-sensitive building height regulations seamlessly address sloping sites citywide. As a result, a separate calculation method based strictly on geographic location is redundant and no longer required.

With no further questions or discussions raised, G. Hunter moved to adopt the proposed amendments, incorporating by reference the consistency statement as presented. P. Chaveas seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

b. TXT-26-0008 – Parking Standard Revisions

E. Brewer delivered the staff report. An excerpt of the presentation follows:

Background: Session Law 2026-39, adopted July 1, 2026, removed the ability for local governments to require a minimum amount of off-street parking for development. In response to these changes, staff recommend removing the City's minimum off-street parking requirements from the Unified Development Ordinance in advance of the law's effective date of January 1, 2027. Eliminating minimum parking requirements will allow the amount of parking provided to be determined by the needs of individual development and market demand rather than by fixed regulatory ratios. This approach is consistent with the State's direction toward reducing unnecessary regulatory barriers to housing and development while allowing property owners and developers greater flexibility in site design.

In 2023, City Council adopted comprehensive amendments to the City's parking regulations. This included establishing a three-tiered approach to parking requirements that varied based on development character. The intent was to have parking minimums in lower-density areas that are less walkable and don't have available public parking, while establishing maximum parking requirements for dense, heavily commercial zoning districts where development is more likely to provide too much parking rather than too little. This proposal amends the parking structure to have two tiers — one with and one without maximums.

E. Brewer reviewed the removal of off-street parking reduction incentives and the associated text amendments to the ordinance.

A. Mercaldo expressed concerns regarding the impact on on-street parking and the marketability of properties lacking dedicated parking. In response, E. Brewer explained that

minimum and maximum limits in the tiered parking system were originally intended for areas without sidewalks, on-street parking, or transit, making off-street parking an essential infrastructure element.

M. Hinds raised concerns about how future development will impact on-street and off-street parking in Brevard, noting the city's potential difficulty in managing these changes and asking how future deficits might be offset. In response, P. Ray, Planning Director, expressed support for a market-driven approach, noting that major retailers like Publix or Aldi would naturally become unviable if they relied solely on on-street parking to attract customers.

P. Ray also mentioned an ongoing parking-study and its potential impact on future development. Ray offered to provide a copy to the board once it is ready, an initiative supported by a majority of the members.

E. Brewer noted that the scope of the amendment appears large because staff are ensuring that the required parking trigger is properly adjusted throughout the entire ordinance. She explained that when reviewing nonconformity and compliance triggers, changes in one area necessitate a close examination of multiple related sections.

With no further questions or discussions raised, E. Brewer reiterated the state's directive to eliminate parking minimums and reviewed its implications for the local ordinance.

P. Chaveas moved to approve the amendments as presented, with reference to the consistency statement. The motion was seconded by A. Mercaldo and passed unanimously.

IX. Final Remarks

E. Brewer announced that the next meeting will be live-streamed on YouTube.

X. Adjournment

The meeting concluded following a motion to adjourn from A. Mercaldo, which was seconded by P. Chaveas. The meeting officially adjourned at 6:24 PM.

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Greg Hunter, Chair

Date Signed: _____

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Edievith Gass, Board Clerk

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