

Meeting Minutes

****Planning Commission Meeting ****

Date: 2026-07-20 **Meeting Type:** Regular Meeting

Call to Order

The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. on July 20, 2026.

Attendees and Participants

- Peter Johnston, Planner
- Harry Smith
- Donald Starkey, Chair
- Jinny Schoonover, Member
- Ryan Masten, Member
- Bob Harrison, Commissioner
- Jaime Fowler-Rossing, Deputy Town Manager`

Approval of Minutes - June 17, 2026

The Commission reviewed the minutes of the June 17, 2026 meeting. No additions or corrections were offered.

Motions and Votes

- Motion made and seconded to approve the minutes of the June 17, 2026 meeting.

Decisions

- Motion carried unanimously.

Permit List

The Commission reviewed the permit list and discussed a permit involving boring work near the library, as well as a utility-related permit entry. Staff advised that Brandon forwards the permit materials for review and that additional information would be obtained on the utility permit. Staff also noted that one recently received permit was for new internet service work.

Follow-Up

- Staff to confirm the details of the utility-related permit and report back.

Harry Smith Lot Line Revision - 610 W. Sunset

Harry Smith presented a lot line revision request for 610 W. Sunset involving the restaurant property and the adjoining parcel currently used for parking. He explained that

the owners intend to combine the two parcels into one property under the same LLC so a future building addition can proceed, as the planned dining-room expansion would cross the existing boundary line. The existing restaurant parcel was described as approximately 9,277 square feet (0.213 acre), and the adjoining parcel as approximately 13,595 square feet (0.312 acre), for a combined total of approximately 22,872 square feet (0.525 acre). The Commission discussed the current setback condition and the anticipated addition layout, noting the expansion would extend to the side rather than closer to the road.

- The request before the Commission was limited to combining the two parcels.
- The future addition will be submitted separately through the building permit and site plan process.
- The applicant stated the owners would first place both parcels into the same LLC before final plat processing.

Motions and Votes

- Motion made and seconded to approve the lot line revision and merger of the parcels at 610 W. Sunset.

Decisions

- Motion carried unanimously.

Follow-Up

- Applicant to resubmit the plat after owner signatures are obtained and Health Department review is completed; Town signature to be obtained last before final sign-off.

Solar Energy District Discussion

The Commission discussed the Town of Greensboro's prior approval of a solar field and the related zoning history. Members noted that the Town later revised its ordinance to allow solar panels on roofs while not allowing solar fields in residential yards within town limits. Discussion centered on annexing a portion of the existing solar property into town so the town may receive revenue from the project. Members also discussed the need for a related zoning change for the annexed area, with R-2 classification referenced during the discussion.

- Members described the revenue arrangement as beginning after an initial period with increases in \$25,000 increments over time.
- Members noted that the town is not directly benefiting from the solar power generated by the facility.
- A zoning discussion on the annexed solar property is expected at a future meeting.

Follow-Up

- Place the annexation-related zoning change for the solar property on an upcoming meeting agenda.

Comprehensive Plan Review - Chapter IX Economic Development, Chapter X Historic and Cultural Resources, and Chapter XI Implementation

Planner Peter Johnston reviewed the final three draft chapters of the Comprehensive Plan. For Chapter IX, Economic Development, he discussed supporting local businesses, encouraging business growth, and evaluating whether home-occupation standards in the zoning code could be updated to better support small-scale business incubation. He cited Easton as an example of a jurisdiction that recently broadened permitted home occupations. For Chapter X, Historic and Cultural Resources, Mr. Johnston discussed the link between preservation and economic development through heritage tourism and recommended close coordination with the Chesapeake Country Heritage Area to identify and promote local historic and cultural resources. He stated he was not recommending creation of a formal historic district, but instead suggested practical preservation measures and zoning provisions that support adaptive reuse of historic structures. For Chapter XI, Implementation, he explained that the chapter compiles implementation recommendations from the preceding plan chapters in one place, as required.

- Mr. Johnston advised that the next step is to assemble the complete draft and submit it to the Maryland Department of Planning for A95 review.
- He stated that DNR, DOT, SHA, and other state agencies would receive the draft for comment, and that Caroline County would also be provided a copy for its 60-day review period.
- He recommended holding a public information meeting near the end of the review period, followed by a public hearing and then a recommendation to the Town Council for adoption by ordinance.

Decisions

- The Commission accepted the proposed path forward for completion of the draft plan, state and county review, public information meeting, and later public hearing.

Follow-Up

- Peter Johnston to prepare the complete draft Comprehensive Plan, draft transmittal materials for A95 review, and a summary for the town web page.
- Schedule a public information meeting during the review period, with a later public hearing before forwarding the plan to the Town Council.

Data Center Discussion

The Commission discussed data centers in general terms and reviewed potential issues the town should consider if such a proposal were presented locally. Members described data centers as facilities housing servers and related equipment supporting cloud computing, artificial intelligence, streaming, banking, healthcare, government, and business applications. The discussion focused on potential impacts including water use for cooling, wastewater and stormwater management, power demand, infrastructure capacity, traffic during construction, and possible effects on nearby waterways and wildlife. Members also

noted ongoing discussion in Federalsburg and Salisbury and expressed interest in obtaining additional information before considering any local policy response.

- Members discussed whether a temporary moratorium might be appropriate until more research is completed.
- A former industrial site was mentioned as one of the few locations that might physically accommodate a large facility.
- No formal action was taken.

Follow-Up

- Continue researching data center impacts and possible regulatory options for future discussion.

Upcoming Events

The Commission reviewed upcoming community events. Members noted the August 29, 2026 car show at the grounds, with food trucks and live music, and stated that the event would benefit the Greensboro basketball tournament organized by Brandon. Members also noted the Tractor Pull on September 5 and the rodeo on September 19.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned.